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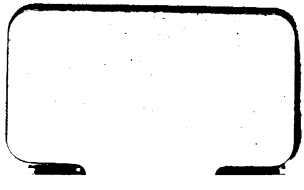

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THE

MODERN ATHENS:

A DISSECTION AND DEMONSTRATION OF MEN AND THINGS

IN

THE SCOTCH CAPITAL.

BY A MODERN GREEK.

Robert Mudie.

Ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι, κατὰ πάντα ὡς δεισιδαιμονεστέρους ὑμᾶς θεωρῶ.

THE SECOND EDITION.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR KNIGHT AND LACEY,

PATERNOSTER-ROW.

MDCCCXXV.

1827
CRB
Edinburgh

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY
98332
ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS.
1898.

BDG. NO. 918/03.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY WILLIAM CLOWES
Northumberland-court.

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Throughout the volume, there will be found *attic* touches of real character, in illustration of the general and local truths.

THE

MODERN ATHENS.

CHAPTER I.

THE AUTHOR AND THE KING ARE INDUCED TO VISIT THE MODERN ATHENS.

"Ego et Rex meus."—WOLSEY.

THE renown of the Scottish Metropolis,—that city of wonders and of wisdom, of palaces and of philosophy, of learned men and of lovely women, had sounded so long and so loudly in their ears, that toward the close of summer 1822, the Author of these pages, and the Sovereign of these realms, were induced to pay it a visit, each in that state and with that pomp and circumstances which was becoming his station in the world. The one, in that unmarked guise which is fitting for one who lives more for the glory of others than of himself, and who sets more value upon the single sentence which

preserves his memory when he is no more, than upon all that he can possess or enjoy in this world. The other in that glow and grandeur, which gains in intensity what it stands some chance of losing in duration,—which is the grand idol of its day; and which, when that day has closed, is gathered to the sepulchre of its fathers, to make room for another—and the same.

The Author of these pages must not be blamed, or deemed disloyal, for having given his own name the precedence of that of his sovereign. Every man in reality prefers himself before all the sovereigns in the world; and wherefore should not one man state his preference in words? The courtier declares that all his services are devoted to his king,—but he devotes them no longer than that king can afford to pay for them: the soldier swears that he will die in defence of the crown,—but he never dies till he is compelled by the superior strength or skill of another. Even upon general grounds, therefore, there is candour if not courtesy in this order of precedence.

But, when the specialities of the case are considered,—when it is borne in mind that the monarch, all-gracious and polite as he is, visited the Athens, as well to dazzle the Athenians by his grandeur, as to delight them by his bounty,—that the native luminaries of that centre of many twink-

ling lights were shorn of their beams by his overwhelming radiance,—that this instance of kingly condescension taught the ΔΗΜΟΣ of Athena to regard as haply something less even than men, those whom they had formerly looked upon as possessing some of the attributies of divinity; and when, on the other hand, it is taken into the account, that the author of these pages made his visit solely with a view of seeing with his own eyes, hearing with his own ears, and proclaiming with his own lips, the truth of those reports which had come to him through so many channels, and of which the fruition had proved so much more delectable than the foretaste: then, assuredly, ought Athena herself, from all the castles of her strength, the halls of her wisdom, the drawing-rooms of her beauty, and the alleys of her retirement, to confess that she owes to the author of these pages more than kingly gratitude.—The King noticed but a few of her people, enriched not many, and ennobled almost none: those pages are intended to enwrap the whole in one pure and perennial blaze of glory.

It was on the evening of the same day that the Monarch took shipping at Greenwich amid the shouts of assembled multitudes, and the Author took his seat on the top of the Edinburgh mail, amid piles of tailors' boxes, each containing a

courtier's habit, in which some fond, and fawning, and fortune-desiring son of Caledonia was to bend the supple knee in the presence of Majesty, within the ancient palace of the Holyrood. The voyages of kings, and the velocity of mail-coaches, are already known and appreciated; and thus there needs no more to be said, than that here also the Author had by several days the precedence of the King.

The jolting of the wooden cases of my courtly neighbours, together with forty-eight hours' exposure to drought by day and damp by night, prepared me, in spite of all my burning anxiety to see the far-famed city, for the enjoyment of several hours of repose; and, as Athena was at this time too much excited for permitting me to enjoy this till towards morning, the sun had risen high before I left my chamber.

Upon hurrying into the street,—into that Prince's Street, which, as I afterwards learned, is at certain seasons of the year the favourite lounge of the Athenian dandies, and at certain hours of the day the favourite haunt of the Athenian fair, who resort thither as the clock strikes four, to feast their fair and anxious eyes upon the self-important forms of dashing advocates, the more dapper and pursey ones of pawkie writers to his majesty's signet, or the attenuated striplings of the quill—the future Clerks and Jefferys, who at that hour are returning

from the harvest of law and profits to such feast as awaits them in ample hall or elevated cock-loft, according to their talents, their connexions, or their purses;—upon hurrying into that street, in the expectation of feasting my eyes upon the natural and architectural glories of the city, I found that those glories were in the mean time veiled in the maddening preparations of a whole people, who had come from every portion of the main land, and from the remotest isle of Thulè, to wonder at and to admire that mightiest marvel of human nature—a king.

So novel and so varied were the costumes, so unexpected and so singular were the features and expressions, and so uncouth and Babylonish were the voices, that the eye and the ear were confounded, the judgment could not understand, and the memory could preserve no record. Here you might see some brawny and briefless barrister—the younger son of a loyal family, with a pedigree at least twice as long as its rental, with trowsers and jacket *à la* Robin Hood, and huge blue bonnet adorned with the St. Andrew's cross and a turkey-cock's feather—looking for all the world like a chimney-sweep's Jack-o'-the-Green, or a calf dressed entire and garnished with cabbage-leaves; while close by him trotted a loyal toast-composing crown-lawyer, with his hinder end cased in a

philibeg, a feathered bonnet, at least a third of his own height, an iron-hilted sword somewhat more than the whole, and a dirk that might have served for a plough-share, puffing and blowing under the weight of his own importance, and the accoutrements of the Celtic society. In close juxtaposition with these was a genuine *Gilhuine dhu*, plaided, plumed, and whiskered, and looking as if all the kings of the earth were nothing to that swaggering chieftain, of whose *tail* he formed no inconsiderable portion. In another place you could catch the broad face and broader bonnet of a lowland farmer of the old school, cased in one uniform garb of home-made blue, with brass buckles to his shoes, a brass key suspended to his watch by a tough thong of black leather, greasy enough,—holding solemn colloquy with that reverend member of the Scottish Kirk, to whom he acted in the capacity of ruling elder, about the danger of compromising the interests of the Whig or *high-flying* part of that establishment, during the *avatar* of so many Tories. The reverend gentleman himself was no bad sight. His general-assembly coat and et ceteras were duly kept at home,—that is to say, in his two-shillings-a-week apartments, up seven pair of stairs, in College-street, or haply in the house of that town acquaintance with whom he had found cheaper board,

—till the eventful days should arrive. Thus he was habited in his parson's grey, the breast of which, where it projected beyond the perpendicular, bore testimony to the fall, both of broth and of punch; while his inferior regions were shaded and shielded by dark-olive velveteens, a little tarnished, worsted hose furrowed as neatly as the turnip-division of his glebe, and cow-skin shoes of the most damp-defying power, which borrowed no part of their lustre from Mr. Robert Warren. Still the good man was clean in his linen; his chin was shorn like a new-mowed field; his visage beamed forth gratitude for "a competent portion of the good things of this life;" and his plump and ruddy hands slumbered with much orthodox ease in the capacious pockets of the velveteens. Anon, a highland laird, whose *tail* comprised only his lady and half a dozen of daughters, and who seemed to be meditating upon the roofless castle and ill-stored larder, to which the expense of parading full thirty-six feet of female charms before the King would subject him, during the weary moons of the Highland winter, hurried past, not at all at his ease.

But, to describe the individuals, strongly marked as they were, would be altogether out of the question; and, indeed, to give any thing like even a sketch of the groups and classes and knots of men, women, and

children, in all habits, of all ages, and in almost every variety of shape, would bankrupt even a German vocabulary, although in that language one be allowed, for clearness' sake, to lump a score of sentences into a single epithet. The cry was still "they come," and Caledonia, from fertile plain and far mountain,—from toiling city and tiresome wilderness,—from rock, and glen, and river,—upon the wings of the wind, urged on by steam, drawn in coach, chaise, waggon, cart, and hurdle, riding upon horses, mules, and donkeys, and running upon feet, shod and unshod,—came scudding and smoking, and creaking and crashing, and reeking and panting, in one conglomerating cloud, and one commingling din, to distract the attention from the attic glories of Edinburgh, and for a time drown her classic sounds in the discordant and untunable din of all the provinces. Here you had the broad shoulders and bold bearing of the borderer, delving an elbow, of the size and substance of a sirloin of beef, into the skinny ribs of an Aberdonian professor of humanity, who all the time kept squeaking like a sick fiddle, in response to the bellow of the other, which reminded you of a bull confined in the vaulted hall of an old castle. There grinned the fat face of an East Lothian farmer, between a Perth baillie on the one hand, and a Stonehaven scribe on the other, like a ram's tail

between the blades of a shepherd's sheers. And, yonder gaped and wondered the great face of a Glasgow negro-driver, like a Gorgon's head—not upon the shield of Minerva. Still there was something interesting in the mighty and motley throng: it put one in mind of Noah's ark, which contained "clean beasts, and beasts that are not clean, and fowls, and every thing that creepeth upon the earth."

The most delectable part of the gathering was the combined clans and the burgh corporations. The former belted like warriors and bellied like weasels, and tricked out for the occasion in their respective tartans of their names, each bearing a sprig of the symbolic tree in his bonnet, a huge claymore in the one hand, and a relay of brogues and stockings in the other, with a great horn snuff-mull thrust into his *sporran*—open and ready for action—hurried along at the *pas de charge* to their head-quarters for the time-being, where they were instantly dispersed into the crowd, thence to re-assemble when the bag-pipe should frighten the last shadow of night.

The corporation-men came in less military but more important guise. Glasgow, the queen of the west, Aberdeen, the glory of the north, Dundee and Perth, the rival empresses of the centre, with Cupar-Fife, Crail, and a hundred others, each

charged with a loyal and dutiful address, which had been composed by the town-clerk, revised in the spelling by the schoolmaster, and was to be discharged at the King, in a manner so powerful and point-blank, as to procure knighthood if not earldom for such candle-selling provost, breeches-manufacturing baillie, or other chief magistrate "after his kind,"—came on with a splendour and an importance that Scotland never before witnessed.

Glasgow, as became her purse and her pride, came blazing like the western star—or rather like a comet whose tail would have girdled half the signs of the zodiac. The van was led by the magistrates, in a coach which previously knew every street and lane of the city, but which was relackered for the occasion, had the city arms emblazoned upon it as large as a pullicate handkerchief, and was drawn by eight grey horses of the genuine Lanarkshire breed,—the thunder of whose feet, as they dashed along, shook the kirk of Shotts, and had nearly laid Airdrie and Bathgate in ruins. The clatter which they made along Prince's Street was astounding; the crowd collected in thousands at the din; some cried it was the king himself; but the final opinion was, that it was "naebody but the magestrates o' Glasgow."

In the train of this goodly leading, there followed full fifty thousand,—or, to speak by measure, as

number was quite out of the question, full forty-four miles of merchants and makers of muslin; and the vehicles which carried the car-borne part of them were more strange and varied than ever appeared at the triumph of a Roman emperor upon his return from smiting the barbarous nations, and carrying themselves and all their utensils captive. Here you would see the equipage of a rich dealer in turmeric or tobacco, fashionable enough except in its contents; there you were presented with a Glasgow *Noddy*, squeezing forward its lank form like a tile, and dragged by a steed with three serviceable legs, and one eye the worse for the wear; in another place you would meet with a hearse, with a tarpaulin over it to hide the death's head and the bones, and crammed full of the saints of the Salt-market, laid lengthways for the convenience of stowage; while the rear was brought up by an enormous tilted waggon, which, though it was at first conjectured to contain Polito's collection of wild beasts, was, upon examination, found to be charged very abundantly with that more important and polished matter—the ladies and gentlemen of Paisley and Greenock.

The pride of the north had been more than usually upon the *qui vive*. The Provost had been attitudenizing before a great mirror for a week, and getting his pronunciation translated into English by

Mr. Megget, of the Academy, for at least a fortnight; the town-clerk had been drudging at "steps" in private with Mr. Corbyn for a month, and the learned Mr. Innes had been applied to, to cast the nativity of the city; and, from the horoscope—Saturn in conjunction with Mars, and Venus lady of the ascendant, it was sagely inferred by the clubbed wisdoms of King's and Mareschal, that the Provost "wad get a gryte mickle purse o' siller, for the gueed o' the ceety, forby a trifle to himsel';" and that, if not a duke, the town-clerk would be a *goose* at any rate, if both eschewed during their sojourn that hankering after the sex which was portended by the lady Venus being in the middle house. Those polite and philosophic preparations having been made, the state coach, with two cats (the emblems of *bon accord*) the size of a couple of yeanling lambs, gilt with Dutch fulzie, and spotted with coffin black, "all for the sparin' o' the cost," rattled along the bridge of Dee at the tail of six hardy shelties from the Cabrach, "which could mak' a shift to live upo' thristles, or fool strae, or ony thing that they cou'd pyke up at a dykeside." Still, however, this mighty magisterial meteor streamed across Drumthwackit, along the "how o' the Mearns," and adoun Strathmore, like an aurora borealis flashing from the pole to the zenith, flickering and crackling, and smelling of brimstone. While its tail drew

the third part of the wilie natives of the city; the other two-thirds took their way in barks and steam-boats, because it was "cheaper by the tae half."

But what words can describe the grand array of the municipal authorities of Perth: Perth, the centre and heart of Scotland—the capital of the Picts, the delight of the Romans, who tumbled down in ecstacy when they first beheld it from the summit of Moncrief Hill, and, fancying that they saw in its green *inches*, its sweeping river, and its ample size, the Campagna, the Tiber, and the Eternal city, shouted in one voice "Ecce Tiber! Ecce Campus Martius!"—Perth, which looks upon Aberdeen as dry stubble, and Glasgow as the dust of the earth; and which has received within its halls and palaces more kings and mighty men, than the compass of these pages could hold, or the sages of its own Antiquarian society could number.

To pay due honour to the decorum, the sagacity, and the harmony of such a city, it is worth while to pause, and learn a little, before speaking of the equipage. Well, what, gentle reader, shall we learn? Why that the same gentleman who sat in that splendid equipage as chief ruler of the city, put to the proof, as touching his Celtic or Sarmatian origin, no less a personage than the Grand Duke Nicholas, brother to the autocrat of all the Russias—

the arbiter for the time being of all the legitimate monarchs upon the continent of Europe. The fame of the city of Perth being, of course, well known upon the banks of the Neva, and the Kremlin at Moscow having been burnt as the first portion of the funeral pile of Buonaparte, there was no place where the magnanimous Alexander could find a fit pattern after which to build the restored Kremlin, except this fine and far-famed city of Perth. The Grand Duke Nicholas, from his well-known architectural and other tastes, was deputed upon this important mission; and, having taken London, the Athens, and a few such places of inferior note in his way, he arrived at the city of all beauty; and was received by a bowing magistracy, and a gaping populace. During his stay at the George Inn, the superiority of the Tay salmon and "Athol brose," over the *caviere* and *quass* of his own country, worked the imperial clay to the temperature of a very Vesuvius. He applied to the Lord Provost in his need. The Lord Provost convened his council. Their words were wise, and their faces were wiser; but they could determine nothing; and so they handed the case over to the ministers and elders of the kirk. These shut their eyes and opened their mouths; and having done so for a due season, they found that as the Grand Duke Nicholas was not in communion with their church, the Grand Duke

Nicholas might, in all matters bodily or ghostly, do as the said Grand Duke Nicholas felt inclined. This response delighted the municipal authorities, and they hurried to the inn to communicate with their own lips this plenary indulgence. Provost Robertson hemmed, stroked his beard, and led off in words wherein the Saxon and the Celtic so perfectly neutralized each other, that the whole was as smooth as oil. But, though the Grand Duke Nicholas understood many single languages, the mouth even of a magistrate delivered of twins, was as new to him as it was incomprehensible. It was clear, from his lack-lustre eye, that he did not understand one word of what was said; and he tried to convey as much in Latin, French, German, Russ, and no one knows how many other outlandish tongues; but as the Grand Duke Nicholas could not ascend to a double language, so neither could the Provost of Perth descend to a single one; wherefore the mighty mountaineer, who during the Athenian display acted Perth, brushed up to him, tumbling down half a dozen of splay-foot councillors and ricketty deacons, and exclaiming, "Try her o' the Gaelic, my Lord Provost! try her o' the Gaelic!"

A person of this calibre, and having buttoned within his waistcoat the chief honour of a town of this fame, could not choose but exhibit a corre-

sponding exterior. Accordingly, the coach was the size of a fly van; the horses would have done credit to Whitbread's heaviest dray; and, in very deed, had a sportsman of the land of Cockaigne seen the emblazoned arms, pop would have gone Joseph Manton right and left at the displayed eagle of silver-white, as at a goose of kindred obesity, and fit for the Michaelmas board.

Of those civic exhibiters, Dundee must close the muster: Dundee, after these, was "filthy Dowlas." The wig of her chief magistrate, (which seemed as though he had exchanged it with the Perth coachman, as they had been taking a groats-worth of swipes and thrippeny blue at Luckey Maccarracher's Hotel, down three flights of stairs, in Shakspeare's Square,) did not contain as much sand-coloured hair as would have stuffed a pincushion; and, as for the poll itself, not a barber in Petticoat-lane would have shown it in his window. Their equipage, which had once belonged to a celebrated radical, was whitewashed for the occasion, had two green salamanders marked upon it, as lank as though they had fed upon smoke—as much as to say that the lading within was proof against fire and brimstone. Four experienced cattle, which had been rescued or borrowed from the dogs'-meat-man, dragged forward the heavy and heartless array; and the brawling burghers took shipping at

their new harbour; but Æolus was adverse, and so they who had hoped to see George the Fourth saw Holland, got fuddled with Scheidam gin, bought a cargo of flax, and returned not much the wiser—that had been impossible.

This, and much more after the same fashion, was enough and more than enough to distract the attention from all the Athenses that ever were built or blazoned in story. But this, and much more like this, was not all: there was also much very unlike it,—so unlike, that when you turned from the one to the other, you felt as if seas had been crossed; ay, as if the very poles of the earth had been reversed, or as if you had passed from the depth of folly to the height of wisdom in the twinkling of an eye. There were the whole assembled people of Scotland,—of that people who, girt with no ill-suited authority, and tricked out with no incongruous and tawdry pomp, had come in the fulness of their hearts and the abundance of their curiosity, to look upon their liege lord the King. The magistrates in their coaches were senseless pomp; the Highland chiefs with their tartans and their tails, were a useless, and, in many instances where they had commanded the small farmers to leave their scanty crops to be scattered by the winds or rotted by the rains, a cruel parade; but the people,—the free and independent people

who assembled of their own will, at their own cost, and for their own pleasure, formed a solemnity at which the eye could not fail to be delighted, and over which the heart could not fail to exult with the most ample and the most exquisite joy. To the hundred thousand inhabitants of Athens, there were added full twice as many strangers, all in their best array; and yet, among the whole, there was nothing taking place at which either law or delicacy could be offended. Religious and political animosity had been laid aside, oppression had been forgiven, and meanness forgotten; the people seemed to compose but one family, and they spoke as if animated with only one wish,—namely, that the King should come: or if they had another, it was that his coming might be speedy and safe. Whatever other men may think of Edinburgh—of Scotland, as a place to be visited, it is a glorious place for being visited by a king; and it will be no proof of wisdom in the future monarchs of Britain, if they allow the crown to pass to a successor without paying it a visit. Kings reign the more happily and the more secure, the more freely and frequently that they show themselves to their subjects.

CHAPTER II.

THE MODERN ATHENS, HAVING ALREADY RECEIVED THE AUTHOR, MAKES PREPARATIONS FOR RECEIVING THE KING.

"The young gudewife o' Auchinblae,
She was a cannie woman;
She wiped her wi' a wisp o' strae,
When her gudeman was comin."—OLD BALLAD.

THE movements of a people of so much gusto, and grace, and gravity, as those who had interposed their thickening clouds between my vision and those municipal and mental glories which I had come to see, could not fail to be according to the most approved canons of philosophy; and thus the mighty matter of the royal visitation had to be received in its beginning, its middle, and its end, before I could proceed in my legitimate and laudatory vocation. Besides the people who came, there were the preparations made and the deeds done,—each of which is well worthy of a chapter.

The rumour of the high honour came upon the

Athens like the light of the morning,—beaming upon the most elevated points, while yet the general mass remained in shadow. The Lord President of the court of Session, the Lord Provost of the City of Edinburgh, the Lord Advocate, Lady Macconochie, the very Reverend and (by office and intuition) very learned Principal Baird, the Sheriff of the County, Deacon Knox, of Radical-threshing renown, Mr. Archibald Campbell, and that fair dame who watches and wipes in Queen Mary's apartments at the Holyrood, were the first upon whom the radiance broke; and the summit of Ben Nevis gilded by the morning sun, looks not more proudly down upon the mists of Lochiel or the melancholy waste of Rannoch, than each and all of those high personages did upon the ungifted sons and daughters of Edinburgh. They were in a fidget of the first magnitude, as to what was to be done, and who was to do it. Long and deep were their deliberations; but, like the Areopagites of the Elder Athens, themselves and their deliberations were in the dark. Hence, as hope is the grand resource in such cases, they deputed the Lord President to seek aid from the Royal Society of Edinburgh,—a society which, composed of the wisest heads, and prosecuting the wisest subjects, always says and does the very wisest things in the very wisest manner.

Fortunately the Society was sitting,—doing its incubation, upon a refutation of Aristotle's poetics by Sir George M'Kenzie, of Coul, Bart., and a proposal for lighting all the roads in Scotland with putrid fish-heads, by Sir John Sinclair. The Lord President opened his mouth and his case; and each learned head nodded with the solemnity of that of a Jupiter. The trumpet-call, blown through the nose by a bandana handkerchief, summoned to the charge the commodity of brains that each possessed; and each having returned the bandana to its place, looked as wise as the goddess of the Elder Athens, or even as her sacred bird. The general question propounded to them ran thus,—"What was to be done, and by whom?" and the deliverance of their wisdoms was, that "Every thing ought to be done, and every body ought to do it"—a response surpassing in profoundity any thing ever uttered by the Pythoness herself. The countenance of the dignified delegate was brought parallel to the ceiling; his eyes and mouth had a contest as to which could become the wider; and, he Macadamized the question by breaking it into smaller pieces; "What should they say to the King; what should they give him to eat; and how should they demean themselves?" It was resolved, as touching the first, that they should say very little, for fear of errors in propriety or in grammar;

but that they should put in motion the addressing-machinery, of which official men in Scotland had so often felt the benefit, and give, in "change for a Sovereign" as it were, two hundred and forty of those copper coins, for their own benefit, and that of the royal closet. The second point was more puzzling: A king would not care for sheep's-head or haggis, and as for French cookery, that would be no rarity. Some lamented that the Airthrie whale was petrefied, and that Dr. Barclay's elephant was nothing but bones; and Sir John Sinclair recommended three mermaids dressed entire,—of which he assured them there were plenty on the coast of Caithness. Upon this point there was a difference of opinion; and they resolved to board the King upon the enemy, by getting ten fat bucks from that notorious Whig the Honourable W. Maule, as his Grace of Montrose had only one to spare. Upon the third point their decision was equally summary and clear, "Every one was to do the best that he could."

Those sage counsels having been given and received, the loyalty of Athens was set fire to in a number of places, and anon the whole city was in a blaze. Lords of session, spies, men who had eaten flesh and drank wine for the glory of the throne, excisemen, crown-lawyers, holders and expectants of crown-patronages, address-grinders, beacooneers,

and all the interminable file of that which had supported the loyalty and existence of Scotland in the worst of times, shone forth with first and fiercest lustre. In that great tattle-market (hereafter to be described), the Parliament-house, you would have found the Tory barristers—the current of whose loyalty is seldom much broken by briefs, clubbing together, cackling as though they had been the sole geese of salvation to the capitol, and stretching their mandibles, and showing their feathers at the more-employed and laborious Whigs, as a race soon to be exterminated. The disposal of majesty himself was committed to the Great Unknown, who sagely counselled that they should make a still greater unknown of the King, by mewing him up in Dalkeith-house, where he could commune only with a few of the chosen; and that they should bring him before the public only once or twice, to be worshipped and wondered at, more as a favour of *their* procuring, than of his own Royal pleasure. How little they knew of his Majesty, and how much they had overrated their own importance, occurred not to them at the time, but they found it out afterwards.

The next weighty question was what the city should do in her municipal capacity; and it was ordered *in limine* that the nightly tattoo of "The Flowers of Edinburgh," which from time imme-

morial had been played in the streets, should be suspended during the solemnity, under pain of escheat of the instruments, allenarly for the private benefit and use of the Lord Provost and magistrates. Every one who has seen Edinburgh must know the perfect resemblance which her High-street —that street in which magistracy is pre-eminently dominant, and where shows are wont to be exhibited—bears to the back-bone of a red-herring. Westward you have the castle in form, in elevation, and in grandeur, the very type of the head; eastward, at the further extremity you have the palace of Holyrood, which from its lowly situation among sesspools and bankrupts, and its usual gloomy and forlorn condition, may very properly be likened to the tail; the intermediate street is the spine; while the wynds and closes which stretch to the North Loch on the one side, and the Cowgate on the other, are the perfect counterpart of the ribs. This High-street was cleared of some old incumbrances, had exhibition-booths erected along its whole extent; and it was expressly ordered that, as the King passed along, no frippery or foul linen should be exhibited from even the third garret windows; and, that during the whole sojourn of royalty, no man should enter the rendezvouses in the closes by the street end, but come in by the back stairs, *more clerici*, in the same fashion as during the

sittings of the General Assembly. But it would be endless to notice all the sagacious orders and prompt actings; suffice it to say, that every thing which could be thought of was ordered, and every thing ordered was done.

The people of the Athens are, even upon ordinary occasions, much more attentive to their dress than to their address: and, therefore, it was to be expected that they should be so upon so momentous an occasion. Besides the tailors' boxes of which I had felt a specimen on my journey, there was work for every pair of sheers and needle in the city. Webs of tartan, wigs, pieces of muslin, paste diamonds, ostrich feathers, combs as well for use as for ornament, were driving over the whole place like snow-flakes at Christmas. But the hurry and harvest were by no means confined to the Caledonian shop-keepers. The rumour had reached the purlieus of Leicester-Square, and had been heard in the fashionable repositories of Holywell. The remnant of Jacob gathered themselves together, resolving to come in for their share of the milk and honey which was flowing in the new-made Canaan of Scotland; while the daughters of Judah put tires upon their heads, and thronged away to spoil the Amorites northward of the Tweed. It were impossible to describe the wares brought by the sons of Jacob,—it were needless to tell of those

brought by the daughters of Israel. The plume which had nodded upon the brows of fifty queens at Old Drury, was refurbished to adorn some proud and pedigreed dame of the north; swords of most harmless beauty—having nothing of steel about them but the hilts, were crossed most bewitchingly in every thoroughfare, accompanied by old opera-hats, bag-wigs, buttons, and every thing which could give the outward man the guise and bearing of a courtier. Before these elegant repositories slender clerks and sallow misses might be seen ogling for the live-long day, and departing in sorrow at nightfall, because the small tinkle in their pockets was unable to procure for them even one morning or evening's use of that garb, the fee simple of which had cost Moses seven shillings and sixpence, and the translation and transmission a crown-piece. Moses, indeed, found that he had something else than Ludgate-hill and Regent-street to contend with; for every ribbon-vending son of the North had garnished his windows with trinkets and ornaments which, in appearance, in quality, and in price, would have done honour to Solomon himself.

But wherefore should I waste time on the ornaments of individuals, when the garnishing of the whole city was before my eyes,—when, from the pier of Leith to the farthest extremity of Edin-

burgh, every act of the coming drama stood rubric and impressed upon men and women, and things. The first, important enough upon all occasions, had now put on looks of ten-fold wisdom and sagacity. The second, all bewitching as they are in their native loveliness, were subjecting their necks to the process of bleaching by chlorine gas, laying their locks in lavender, sleeping in "cream and frontlets," and applying all manner of salves and unctions to the lip, in order to make it plump and seemly for the high honour of royal salutation. I have no evidence that any daughter of the North fed upon the flesh of vipers in order to induce fairness in her own—as little have I evidence that there was need for such a regimen; I did hear, however, that the lady of one baronet took up her lodgings for two successive nights in a warm cow's-hide, and that she of a senator of the college of justice wrought wonders upon her bust by a cataplasm of rump-steak, but I cannot vouch for the facts, or set my *probatum* to them as successful experiments in kaleiosophy. So much for the first blush of preparation with the men and women; I need not add, that like the streams of Edina, it became rich as it ran.

The attitudes of things were a good deal more diversified and puzzling; and, perhaps the shortest way of getting rid of them would be to adopt the

laundress' phrase, and say they were "got up;" but this, though summary and in the main correct, would neither be just nor satisfactory,—because, in all modern stage displays, the actors would cut but a sorry figure were it not for the scenery.

As, however, the scenery arises out of the drama itself, while the actors have an existence and character off the boards, it will be necessary to premise an outline of the plot. That was arranged into the following acts, with as many interludes public and private as could be crammed into the time and space. The King was to land—to be received by whoever should be accounted the greatest and most loyal man in Scotland, which some said was Lord President Hope, some Bailie Blackwood, some Sir Walter Scott, others Sir Alexander Gordon, of Culvennan, a few Principal Baird, and even Professor Leslie had his own vote and another—he was to shake hands with Bailie Macfie, of Leith, (with his glove on, as it were,) then he was to pass along streets, through triumphal arches, over bridges, and in at gates, to the ancient palace of the Holyrood, where the old throne from Buckingham-House had been darned and done up for his reception, by way of reading him an introductory lecture upon Scotch economy. Such was to be the first act of the drama, and the preparations for it were peculiarly splendid. The line of progress, which was both

long and broad, was to be thronged with people; the devices and mottoes were to be got up, to let the King know that an illumination was coming; the ladies were instructed to fidget and wriggle in the windows, by way of hint that there would be a dance; the presence of Sir William Curtis made it certain there would be turtle-soup; the curl of the Reverend Dr. Lamond's nose threatened a sermon; the archery and men with white sticks pointed to a procession; the hungry looks of the Burgh magistrates and local men in authority, had obvious reference to a levee; the pouting lips of the ladies rendered a drawing-room indispensible; and the bevies of breechless Highlanders and bandy-legged Southerns in similar costume, were pretty sure tokens of a theatrical exhibition,—and, from the extreme officiousness of Glengarry, the Kouli Khan of all the Celts, it was pretty apparent that that exhibition could be nothing else than Rob Roy—that prince of chieftains and cow-stealers. Thus, while the first act was to be perfect in itself, it was shrewdly contrived that it should develop the sequence and economy of the others; but still, to make assurance double-sure, the gazette writer for Scotland, who had been a sinecurist since the creation, was kept drudging at delineations of doings and programmes of processions from morning till night, and sometimes from night till morning.

When the whole matter had been planned,—when the officers of the household for Scotland had got their robes of state,—when the archers had learned to walk without treading down the heels of each other's shoes,—when the tailor, the barber, and the dancing-master had done the needful upon the Provost and Bailies,—when the tails of the Highland chiefs had run quarantine,—when the edge of the parsons' appetites had been a little blunted,—when the wonted tattoo had ceased,—when lamps had been hung upon the front of every house,—when the ladies had drilled themselves in train-bearing, by the help of sheets and table-cloths, and learned to do their salutations without any inordinate smacking,—and when the elements of dazzling and of din had been collected upon all the heights, in the likeness of bonfires, and bombs, and bagpipes,—it wanted only the placing of the royal foot upon the pier at Leith, to bring all those mighty things into forward and fervent action.

Amid all those mighty preparations, there was one thing which was very remarkable, and which throws perhaps more light both upon the morale of the spectacle and the feelings of the people, than any other that could be mentioned. The Scots, generally, are allowed to be a people of song and of sentiment. There is a feeling in their melodies, an alternate pathos and glee in their songs, and an

enthusiasm and romance in their legends, which are perhaps not equalled, and certainly not surpassed by those of any nation in the world. This may with truth be said of the nation, taking the average of times and of places; and, when it is considered that the Modern Athens holds herself up to the world as a sort of concentrated tincture or spirit of all that is fine or feeling in the country,—as being the throne of learning—the chosen seat of sentiment and of song; furthermore, when upon this occasion there was gathered in and about the Athens, all the lights which are acknowledged as shining, and all the fires which are recognised as burning, in taste and talent throughout Scotland; it must be acknowledged, that something might have been expected to go upon record worthy of such a people at such a time. It had been known that the great Seneschal of all those royal musters,—the ears of the Lord Advocate, the mouth of the Lord President, the eyes of the Lord Provost—to hear, to speak, and to stare, at mighty things, as it were,—it had been known that, at the mere loosening of a bookseller's purse-strings, his verse had flowed rapid as the Forth, and his prose spread wide as its estuary; and surely it was not too much to hope that he would consecrate in song, or conserve in story, an event which was so congenial to his avowed sentiments, and which must have been (from the fond and

forward part he played in it) so gratifying to his individual vanity. When, too, it was recollected that this famed and favoured servant of the muse had gone, invited or not invited, to London at the Coronation, lest the Laureate should break down under the compound pressure of solemnity and sack, and the glory slide into oblivion for the want of a fit recorder, it was surely to be hoped that he would have done justice to the royal show in his own country, and in his own city. But, *ecce ridiculus mus!* the pen which had been so swift, and the tongue which had been so glib at the bidding of a mere plebeian bookseller, were still and mute when a king was the god, and an assembled nation the worshippers. He who had made the world to ring again with the shouts of Highland freebooters, and the din of whose tournaments yet sounds in our ears, failed at the very point of need! "Ah, where was Roderick then! One blast upon *his* bugle horn" had been worth all the senseless vulgarity from Prince's-street, and all the piddling inanity of Tweedale-court. It was wished for, it was called for, it was imperious upon every principle—not of consistency merely, but of gratitude; but it came not; and all that stands recorded as having come from his otherwise fluent pen upon the occasion, is a paltry and vulgar drinking song, which it would disgrace the most wretched Athenian *caddie*

to troll in the lowest pot-house of the Blackfriars wynd.

If one whose piping is so gratefully received and so amply rewarded, and whose loyalty has been withal so abundant and so profitable, remained mute or degenerated into mere foolery upon the occasion, what could be expected from the provincial and unhired dabblers in verse, who write only to the casual inspiration of love or liquor, and melt in madrigals or madden in catches, according as Cupid or Bacchus holds the principal sway! Nothing, I maintain, and therefore the Great Unknown is guilty not only of his own omission, but of that of all his countrymen. If he had done as he ought,—done in a way worthy of himself—putting the occasion entirely out of the question, there is not a doubt but the whole drove would have been at his heels. As the case stands, whatever may be the comparative merits of the Whig *becks* and Tory *boowings*, the poetic eclât of the visit of George the Fourth must succumb to that of the descent of Jamie in sixteen hundred and eighteen.

How is this to be accounted for?—I can see why the mouths of the minor poets must have remained shut; but to find an apology for the master one, is no such easy matter; and perhaps the safe way for all parties would be to place his salvation in consternation by day, and cups by night.

Still, it is remarkable that, though this was the only royal visit with which Scotland had, during the reigns of six monarchs, been honoured, there is no where existing a single decent page, either in verse or in prose, in commemoration of it; and, if the long preparation which was made for it, the bustle which it occasioned, and the crowds which it drew together, be considered, one would feel disposed thence to conclude, that the Athenians, instead of being that literary people which they are represented, are a set of ignorant barbarians. This however is, as themselves say, not the fact, and therefore there must be a cause for their supineness. That cause, however, being beyond the depth of my philosophy, must be left to their own.

While the Athens was making all preparations to receive the king, and the king all speed to visit the Athens, the elements, those outlaws from even royal authority, created a little anxiety on both sides. The weather, which had been propitious at the outset, became (notwithstanding that the mayor of Scarbro', in his zeal to present a loyal address at the end of a long stick, had been chucked into the sea, like another Jonah, and not swallowed up by a whale) not a little unpleasant, as the royal squadron approached that singular rock, once the abode of state prisoners, and now of

Solon geese, denominated the Bass, and resembling more than any thing else a great pigeon-pie riding at anchor. The chosen had arranged that this same rock, emblematical of the ancient manners as a prison-house, and haply of the modern men as a gooserie, should be the first Scottish soil trodden by the royal foot. Some said, that this was intended to show that, though the said chosen were unable to contend with their political opponents in argument, they had the power on their side, and could send them to prison; but that is a point without the scope of my speculation, and it is of no consequence, as the Father of the sea would not permit the Father of the British people to land.

When a day and night more than had been calculated upon were expired, without any tidings of the royal squadron, the gloom of the Athenian authorities became sad in the extreme. Here you would find one wight twining up the steep acclivities of Arthur's Seat, jerking his fatigued corpus upon the pile of coal which had been collected upon the top for a bon-fire, and straining his owl-like eyes to penetrate the dense fog of the eastern horizon, like a conjuror ogling the volume of futurity; and there would go a frowsy bailie or fat sheriff hotching and blowing to the observatory on the Calton Hill, keeping the anxious window of his wisdom

for ten minutes at the telescope, and leaving it with a growl that he could "see nothing,"—and how could he, bless his honest soul! for he had not removed the brass cap from its opposite extremity? No matter: bailies and sheriffs must understand Erskine's Institutes, but a telescope was quite another thing. Amid this looking and lamenting, the wind freshened, and it rained; and there were also one or two distant growls of thunder, which fear very naturally converted into signals of distress from his Majesty's yacht. Upon this, the mental agony became immense; and, saving an attempt on the part of Kerne of the Clan Donnochie, to open with his dirk a free passage for the soul of a Canon-gate constable, no event had broken the gloom of that dismal Tuesday. "Mirk Monday" had long been a day accursed in the Scottish calendar, and it is now feared that his younger brother was to reign in his stead.

Next morning was little better; and though all the loyal spirits of Athens scrambled to the heights to call the king from the fog-enshrouded and "vasty deep," there was no answer to their call, save the hollow booming of the east wind, and the melancholy scream of those sea-fowl which had escaped from the storm. They who had been instrumental in bringing their sovereign into such peril, wist not what to do; and, as is the case with

most men in such a situation, they did nothing,—at least nothing which could increase his safety, or accelerate his arrival.

Still the preparations went on; and, in the sadness and anxiety of the day, the drilling of the highlanders and archers—who had become so expert as to face all possible ways at a single word of command—were not a jot abated, while the gloom of the night was broken by the clinking of hammers erecting scaffolding in every thoroughfare, as well as by pattering feet of official and other men learning to "make their legs" against the levee, and the scratching of grinders' pens translating, redacting, and otherways brushing up loyal and dutiful addresses, which came before them on all complexions of paper, and in all concatenations of orthography. Nor were these glimpses through the gloom confined to sounds; the sights were equally delectable. Here, one might catch a sight of one single star, not of the first magnitude, twisting her face into all expressions, and her neck into all attitudes, in order to find the barley-corn of beauty in the bushel of chaff; and there again might be beheld a whole constellation, bedraperied with sheets as aforesaid, streaming forward through some long gallery, tailed and terrible as comets, and then retreating backwards with perplexed and puzzled steps, tucking up the

sheets as they progressed, and occasionally dropping like falling stars from the firmament of their practice.

Morning dawned; and the sleepless eyes and speculationless telescopes again fared forth to scan the gloomy east. One from the top of the Calton, cried, "There is the Royal George! I know her by the spread of her sails, and the sweep of her oars." The crowd looked toward the sea, and saw nothing. The observer looked at his telescope: a moth had settled upon the object glass, with downy wings elevated above, and feet and feelers extended below. Still the crowd collected, till every height commanding a view of the point at which the Forth mingles its broad waters with the ocean, was absolutely paved with human beings, all worshipping towards the east, with more intense devotion than a caravan of Moslem pilgrims in the desert.

Toward mid-day, the more experienced eye, or better-ordered glass of the port-admiral at Leith, descried the smoke of the assisting steam-boats. Up went the royal standard; every gun of every ship in the roads told the tidings; and instantly the echoes of cliff and castle rang to the shouts of an hundred thousand joyous voices. All was bustle and scramble. Heralds marshalling here, clans mustering there, and people crowding every-

where; while the royal squadron, now aided by a gentle but favourable breeze, stood majestically toward the roads, where it anchored about two o'clock. Anon the water was peopled with loyalty; the splendour of dresses and of flags dazzled the eye; and the swell of all sorts of noises deafened the ear. The equilibrium of the clouds was unsettled; and, just as preparations were making for the landing, rain fell in torrents. Lest so much finery should be spoiled in the first scene of the drama, the grand ceremony was postponed till the next morning. The king, in the mean time, received at the hands of Sir Walter Scott, a St. Andrew's cross, the gift of some ladies of Scotland, whose names (prudently perhaps) never were distinctly published. Nearly at the same time with this, came a messenger of another description. He told that the Marquis of Londonderry was no more; and thus even the royal joy was not wholly unmingled. Still the king showed himself to his aquatic visitors in the most courteous manner; and, perhaps, the two events were the better borne that they came together. Thus the Athens had another night for preparation; and, as it was not a night of fear, that preparation went on with increased activity and spirit. She had now seen the king;

and but a night was to elapse, ere the gratification was to be mutual, by the king seeing her. On his part, indeed, it should have been greatest, as she had given herself most trouble, and would continue longest to feel the cost.

CHAPTER III.

THE ATHENS RECEIVES THE KING, AND IS JOYOUS.

All tongues speak of him, and the bleared sights
Are spectacled to see him : your prattling nurse
Into a rapture lets her baby cry,
While she chats him : the kitchen malkin pins
Her richest lockram 'bout her reechy neck,
Clambering the walls to eye him : stalls, bulks, windows,
Are smother'd up, leads fill'd, and ridges horsed,
With variable complexions; all agreeing
In earnestness to see him : seld'-shewn flamens
Do press among the popular throngs, and puff
To win a vulgar station : our veil'd dames
Commit the war of white and damask, in
Their nicely-gawded cheeks, to the wanton spoil
Of Phœbus' burning kisses ; such a pother,
As if that whatsoever god who leads him
Were slily crept into his human powers,
And gave him graceful posture.—SHAKSPEARE.

EVERY one, who having heard of the splendour which is attendant upon royalty while dwelling at a distance from the scene of its display, has thence been induced to mingle himself with the

crowd of ordinary spectators, must have felt how much the reality falls short of the anticipation. One sees a gaudy vehicle drawn slowly along, and within it a human being, apparently but ill at his ease, and obviously feeling the same danger of tumbling from his unnatural und elevated seat as one perched upon the top of a pyramid. A crowd, usually formed of the ill-dressed and the idle, run and roar about the carriage; the trumpeters play "God save the King," the attendants wave their hats and cheer, and the spectacle, having passed through its routine, is no more heeded. In London, for instance, those state processions which the etiquette of the court inflicts upon the sovereign, are not more imposing than a Lord-Mayor's show; and even the most loyal, unless it conduces in some way or other to their personal interest, care little for a second display.

With this experience, I had prepared myself for being disappointed in that spectacle which had brought Scotland together; and I *was* disappointed. But my disappointment was of a new kind; for the solemnity, the grandeur, and the effect of the scene, were just as much superior to what I had hoped for, as those of any analogous scene that I had witnessed fell below the anticipation. The Scots are, unquestionably, not a superstitious people; neither do they care for parade.

Upon ordinary occasions, too, they are a disputing and quarrelling, rather than an united people; and with the exception of those who are either paid or expect to be paid for it, they are by no means inordinate in their loyalty. But they are a people whose feelings have the depth, as well as the placidity, of still waters; the rocks, the rivers, and even the houses, are things of long duration; there is no portion of his country upon which the foot of a Scotchman can fall, that speaks not its tale or its legend; and there is no Scotchman who does not look upon himself as identified with the annals of his country, and regard Edinburgh as the seat of a royal line, of which no man can trace the beginning, and of which no Scotchman can bear to contemplate the end; and which, though it has been bereaved of its royal tenant by an unfortunate union with a more wealthy land, is yet more worthy of him, and more his legitimate and native dwelling-place, than any other city in existence.

The operation of those feelings, or prejudices, or call them what you will, produced, upon the occasion of which I am speaking, a scene, or rather a succession of scenes, of a more intense and powerful interest than any which I had ever witnessed, or, indeed, could have pictured to myself in the warmest time and mood of my imagination. I had thought the thronging of the people to Edinburgh

a ridiculous waste of time; I had laughed till every rib of me ached, at the fantastic fooleries of the Celts and Archers, and the grotesque array of the official men; and founding my expectations upon these, I had made up my mind that the whole matter was to be a farce or a failure. But I had taken wrong data: I had formed my opinion of Scotland from the same persons that, to the injury and the disgrace of Scotland, form the channel through which the British Government sees it; and therefore I was not prepared for that solemn and soul-stirring display,—that rush of the whole intellect of a reflective, and of the whole heart of a feeling people, adorned and kept in measured order, by that intermixture of moral tact and of national pride, which was exhibited to the delighted King, and the astonished courtiers. It seemed as though hundreds of years of the scroll of memory had been unrolled; and that the people, carrying the civilization, the taste, and the science, of the present day along with them, had gone back to those years when Scotland stood alone, independent in arms, and invincible in spirit.

As, to the shame of the literature of Scotland, and more especially to that of the Athens—who arrogates to herself the capability of saying every thing better than any body else, no account of this singular burst of national feeling has appeared, ex-

cept the gossiping newspaper-reports at the time, and a tasteless *pot pourri*, hashed up of the worst of these, with scraps of gazettes, and shreds of addresses,—in which, more especially the latter, it would be vain to look for any trace of the spirit of the people,—it is but an act of common justice in me to devote a few pages to it, though I know well that I shall fail of the effect which I am anxious to produce. In order, as much as I can, to guard against this, I shall divide the remainder of this chapter (which, in spite of me, will be rather a long one) into as many sections as there were acts in the drama of the King's visit. The first of these will of course be,

THE PROCESSION TO HOLYROOD.

——— "He comes, he comes!
Sound the trumpets, beat the drums."

It seemed as though the lowering skies and sweeping storms, which had made the longing people of Scotland almost despair of the pleasure of the royal visit, and which had drenched them, and given them a whole night of impatient delay, when the King was not many furlongs from the Scottish shore, had been intended to heighten by their contrast the splendour and eclât of the royal debarkation. The morning of Thursday, the 15th of August, dawned in all the freshness of spring and

in all the serenity of summer. The rains had given a renovated greenness to the fields, and a thorough ablution to the city; and while the first rays of the morning sun streamed through the curling smoke of fires that were preparing the breakfast of three hundred thousand loyal and delighted people, they painted upon the adjoining country that "clear shining after rain," which is, perhaps, the fairest and freshest guise in which any land can be viewed. The soft west wind just gave to the expanded Firth as much of a ripple as to show that it was living water, without curling the angry crest of a single billow. There was a transparency in the air, of which those who are accustomed only to the murky atmosphere of London, or the exhalations of the fat pastures of England, could have no conception. Not only the colour of every pendant in the roads, but the cordage of every ship, and the costume of every one on board, was discernible from the elevated grounds about Edinburgh; and, while standing on the Calton Hill, the royal squadron, with thousands of boats and barges sporting around it, on the one hand,—and the bustling crowd on the other, decked in their various and gaudy attire, flitting past every opening, and filling every street that was visible, composed a panorama of the most spirit-stirring description.

The ancient standard of Scotland was hoisted at

Holyrood; the ancient crown and sceptre of Scotland were there ready to be lent to his Majesty,—but too sacred and too dear to Scotland as the symbols of her old and loved independence for being given to a king, whom she had come from her utmost bourne, decked herself in her finest apparel, and tuned her heart to its choicest song of joy, to welcome; the royal household of Scotland, more showy in their attire, and more self-important in their bearing, than is usual where kings are subjects of daily exhibition, because the robes and the occupation were new, were proceeding toward the place of their rendezvous by the longest and most circuitous paths that they could find out, anxious to levy their modicum of admiration ere the more transcendent splendour and dignity of the king should draw all eyes towards itself, and leave them as the forgotten tapers of the night, after the glorious orb of day has climbed the east; the Caledonian fair were thronging to the casements, (balconies there were none,) each looking more happy than another, and one could easily perceive that faces, which, during a reasonable lapse of years—either through the fault or the failure of Hymen—had been stiffened by sorrow, and saddened by despair, were that day to be decked in their earliest, their virgin smile,—a smile which, they were not without hopes, might draw

other eyes, and charm other hearts, than those of their sovereign; and the maddening burghers and wondering yeomen were trotting about from place to place, and, in their zeal for obtaining the best sight of the king, running some risk of not seeing him at all.

Having seen the muster of the official men—as well those who were to proceed to the pier of Leith to receive his Majesty, as they who were to deliver to him the keys of the city of Edinburgh, and thereupon speak a speech, into which a full year's eloquence of the whole corporation, with some assistance of the crown lawyers, and a note or two by Sir Walter Scott, was crammed,—having examined the facilities which the people along the line of the procession had given the tenants of a day for gratifying their eyes,—and having felt more joy at heart than I had ever done at a public spectacle, at seeing so vast a multitude so very happy, and so very worthy of happiness,—I set about choosing my own station, in order that I might gaze, and wonder, and be delighted with the rest; and, after very mature deliberation, I resolved that that should be upon the leads of the palace of Holyrood, provided I could get access to the same.

Access was by no means difficult to be obtained, nor was my ascent to the top of the ancient struc-

ture without its pleasures. In the first place, I passed through the apartments of the fair queen of Scotland,—the fairest, and all things considered, perhaps, the frailest of royal ladies; and there I found the whole localities of Rizzio's murder, well preserved both in appearance and in tradition. In the second place, I had the pleasure of seeing upon the leads, dressed in the plain tartan of her adopted clan, the fair Lady Glenorchy, who possesses all the charms of Mary, without any of her faults. I am not sure that I ever saw a finer woman; I am sure that I never saw one in whose expression intellect was more blended with sweetness, or spirit softened and enriched by modesty and grace.

Besides those intellectual (is that the term?) pleasures, there were other things which rendered my locality the best of any: First, it commanded a larger and better view of the procession; and, secondly, though Edinburgh looks romantic from any situation, there is none where it becomes so perfect a fairy tale. While I paced along the leads of the palace, and I had ample time to do it, I was more and more rivetted, both in motion and in gaze, by the wonderful scene. Eastward was the expanse of blue water, widening and having no boundary in the extreme horizon, and confined every where else between the soft, green, lovely, and productive shores of Lothian and Fife. Along

the whole visible portion of the waters, no ship was going forth upon her voyage, but many were cruizing towards the port of Leith by the combined powers of every thing that enables man to make his way upon the deep. Northward rose the Calton Hill, ornamented with one of the best and one of the worst specimens of modern architecture, having a park of artillery and a picquet of horsemen upon its summit, and its sides groaning under the weight of a multitude which no man could count. Sufficiently elevated at one place for throwing its more elevated objects against the sky, and rapid enough in its slope for bringing out at whole length the masses of people who occupied it, the Calton did not conceal either the royal squadron in Leith roads, or the majestic summits of the remote Grampians,—from which every cloud and every trace of mist had been brushed away, when I first ascended, while the strong and peculiar refraction that the atmosphere in such cases exerts, gave to them only half their distance and double their height, as if the mountains themselves had raised them from the beds of their primeval residence, and come near to behold the splendour which the Athens had put on, and the glory with which she hoped to be blessed. Towards the south, Salisbury Crags and Arthur's Seat raised their summits to the mid heaven, and threw their

broad shadows over the valley, into which the beams of light which poured in at the openings of the majestic wall of rock, seamed the blue shadow, as the lapis lazuli is seamed by gold. The view this way was to me peculiarly sublime, not only from the great contrast that it formed with every thing around, and indeed every thing that one could conceive to exist in the vicinity of a city, but because of its own peculiar and inherent sublimity, and the wild accompaniments with which it had been decorated for the occasion. The crags rose rugged and perpendicular, with their profile dark as night, while standards, and tents, and batteries, and armed men on foot and on horseback, hung over the wild and airy steep. A flood of mellow light which came in from behind gave them the lineaments of giants, and a glory of colouring far exceeding any thing that limner ever tinted. Then rose the more sublime height of Arthur's Seat thrown back by the vapour which the sun was exhaling from the dew in the dell between, and having its summit haloed with a glory of radiant prismatic colours, through which the solitary stranger or flitting picquet seemed beings of another world. And, as the sun-beams came and went upon burnished helm or brazen cuirass, the whole seemed spotted with gold, or inlaid with costly stones. At my feet was the court of the

palace, in which the royal standard was guarded by a fine body of highlanders, and the palace-gates kept by a goodly array of the Edinburgh archery, who, though they seemed not to be the least important part of the spectacle in their own eyes, were yet intent upon procuring for their favoured fair those situations from which they would best view the glories of the archers and of the king.

Before me, the Athens herself clustered her buildings, and shot up her towers, her spires, and her castles, with a witchery of effect, which can be equalled by the view of no other British City, and surpassed by that of the Athens from no other point. When one, for instance, ascends the top of St. Paul's, one wonders at the business and bustle that is around; but the eye is tired with the interminable lines of dull brick, and the dingy clusters of puny steeples, and smoking chimney-stalks; while the sound, and the rushing, and the artificial origin of the whole, make one melancholy with the idea that it will not last. One should never look down upon a city; the sight is always dingy, and the view always produces melancholy.

From the leads whereon I stood, though I was high above the court of the palace, I was below all the city, except that rubbish which was concealed; and never did the mere sight of houses produce such an effect upon me. The ground was

so magical, and the buildings so different in form, that the whole seemed as though it had been moulded by the hands of giants, or commanded into existence by the fiat of a god; and, in firmness and colour, it was so like the rocks upon which it rested, and by which it was surrounded, that it looked as though it had lasted from the beginning of time, and would endure to the end. Right in front of me, the high street opened at intervals its deep ravine; upon the summit of a hill, but still, from the great height of the houses, appearing as if that hill had been cleft in twain, to open a way from the palace on which I stood to the castle, which, from its aged rock at the other extremity, looked proudly down as the monarch of the Athens, seated upon a throne which would out-exist those of all the monarchs of the nations. Around this were clustered palace and spire, each upon its terrace, while the spacious bridges, beneath whose arches the distant Pentland hills and the sky were visible, formed an aërial path from the grandeur of one place to the grandeur of another.

There was something so novel, so wildly romantic, and so overpowering, in all this, that I retired to the most remote and elevated part of the roof, leaned me against a chimney-stalk, and, forgetting the king, the procession, the people, and

myself, was in one of those reveries, in which the senses are too much gratified, and the judgment too much lost, for allowing the fancy to sketch, and the memory to notice. "This is incomprehensibly fine!" were the words which I then ejaculated to myself; and now that the presence of the picture is gone, and the recollection such as no mind could retain, I can do nothing more than repeat them.

I stood thus absorbed till about mid-day, at which time the flash and the report of a solitary gun from the royal yacht caught my eye and my ear, and made me start into recollection. Just then, a cloud of the most impenetrable darkness had collected behind, or, as it appeared to me, around the castle, which made the Athens appear as if her magnitude stretched on into the impenetrable gloom of infinitude. But I had no time to pursue the train of feeling to which that would have given rise; for the volleyed cannon—flash upon flash and peal upon peal, and the huzzaing people—shout upon shout and cheer after cheer, made the cliffs and mountains ring around me, and the palace rock under my feet, as though the heavens and the earth had been coming together, and the Athens had been to be dashed to pieces in the maddening of her own joy. The ships in the roads first pealed out the tale, and the blue waters

of the Forth were enshrouded in a vesture of silvery smoke. Anon the batteries upon the Calton took up the tidings; and their roar, all powerful as it was, was almost drowned in the voices of the thousands which thronged that romantic hill. In an instant, the same deafening sounds, and the same gleaming fires, burst away from the Crags on the left; and the cannon and the cry continued to call and to answer to each other from the right hand and from the left, as—

> —— "Jura answers through her misty shroud,
> Back to the joyous Alps, which call to her aloud,"

till every atom of the air was reverberating with sound, every cliff and every building returning its echo, the ground reeling to the noise, the fleecy smoke hanging upon the cliffs like the clouds of heaven, or settling down till the Athens put on the appearance of a sea, in which the more elevated buildings and spires seemed islets, and the castle, with her glaring fires, and her astounding volleys, towered like an Etna, burning, blazing, and thundering across the deep. What with the closing of the natural clouds, and the spreading of the artificial ones, the darkness which even at noonday had settled over the city was awfully sublime; even the mass of the castle, large and lofty though it be, was shrouded in the thick vapour of the sky

and of itself, so that all which the eye could discern was the flashes of artillery contending with the flickering of distant lightning, and all that the ear could hear was the mingled peal and jubilee, in the pauses of which the voice of the distant thunder was too feeble for being heard. The darkness borrowed additional sublimity, if indeed that was possible, from the pure unclouded light of the sun, which a few straggling beams, that occasionally stole their way as far as the slopes of Arthur's Seat, told me was sleeping upon the plains of Lothian; and the din of the joy received all the accession of contrast from the stilly silence which reigned in the deserted halls and desolated villages of that busy and blooming land. Amid this darkness and din, the royal barge rowed softly towards the Scottish strand, and the sovereign of these realms was the first to set his foot upon Scottish ground, while the author of these pages occupied the very pinnacle of the Scottish palace. The magistrates of Leith, all tingling and but ill at their ease, stood shaking and speechless to receive him; but their blushes were a good deal spared by those grand monopolists of Caledonian loyalty, the lords president, justice clerk, baron register, and advocate, and that mighty master of the ceremonies, and that mightier memorialist, (who, it was hoped, would cut the thing into everlasting

brass,) Sir Walter Scott. But though the monopolizing lords blushed not, they blanched a little, when they found the eyes of the king turning every where with the same beaming delight upon the people, whose appearance and whose conduct showed him that Scotland, if not the most polished, was by no means the least polished, jewel of his crown; and the baronet, who haply was brought there, chiefly from the eclât which his literary renown would confer upon his less gifted but more official associates, found perchance that the glory of an author, however high in itself, and however rewarded, is but a tiny instrument of Royal joy.

The guardsmen, who very judiciously were chiefly either Scottish citizens or Scottish soldiers, succeeded, not in keeping order among their countrymen, but in preventing breaches of it among themselves; but the *Craggan nan phidiach*,—the Raven of the Rock of Glengarry, was of too bold spirit, and too bustling wing to be so restrained. To prevent accidents, this mighty personage, who had stood up bonnetted, dirked, and pistolled, at the King's coronation, to the utter dismay of the ladies of England, had been sent upon this occasion to keep watch and ward upon the state-coach; but when the coach had taken its place in the procession, the chieftain stepped a little way out of his, bustling through the

crowd to give Mac Mhic Alistair Mhor's welcome; and it was not till the Lion of England had knitted his brows and shaken his mane, that the Raven of the Rock flew back to her station.

Onward moved the procession, through avenues of people, and arches of triumph,—one of which latter spoke as much as ten volumes upon the learning of the Athens, and the ignorance of the *mercatores* of Leith: "*O felicem diem!*" said that side of the first triumphant arch which looked towards the Athens; "O happy day!" quoth the one which smiled upon the lack-Latin lieges of Leith.

When the procession had cleared the town of Leith, and was moving gracefully along that broad and beautiful walk, which still keeps Leith at a respectful and proper distance from the Athens, the first presentation upon Scottish ground was made to the King—and perhaps none more honourable in its spirit, or honest in its intention, was made to him during his whole sojourn. There was presented to George the Fourth, a *Parliament-cake*,—not such a cake as is gleaned from the fields of a country, or baked in the oven of a royal burgh, and thence sent to St. Stephen's Chapel as a well-leavened waive-offering, (and from which, by the way, Scotland has got by way of eminence the name of the *Land of Cakes*,) but something more luscious and learned still,—a cake of sweet and spicy gin-

ger-bread, stamped with all the letters of the alphabet, and by combination and consequence, with the whole learning and literature of the united kingdom. The presentation alluded to happened thus: Margaret Sibbald, an able-bodied matron of Fisher-Row, had been induced, through the compound stimulus of curiosity and loyalty, to leave her home all unbreakfasted, in order to take her place in the royal procession; Margaret had stored her ample leathern pouch with a pennyworth of Parliament-cake, in order to support nature through this praise-worthy work; but Margaret's eyes had been so much feasted, that Margaret's stomach was forgotten. Seeing that the King wore a hue which she did not consider as the hue of health, and judging that it might arise from depletion induced by his rocking upon the waters, she elbowed her way through horsemen, Highland-men, archermen, and official men, up to the royal carriage, and drawing forth her only cake, held it up to his Majesty, expressing sorrow that his royal countenance was so pale, and assuring him that if she had had any thing better he would have got it. A forward strippling of the guards charged Margaret sword in hand, to which Margaret replied, "Ye wearifu' thing o' a labster! Ye hae nae sense, I hae dune mair for the King than you can either do or help to do; I hae born him sax bonnie seamen as e'er

hauled a rope, or handled a cutlass." It was, however, no time for prolonged hostilities, and so Margaret was lost in the crowd, and the guardsman not noticed in the procession.

Many were the events of the march ere the King arrived at the end of Picardy-place, to receive the silver keys of the Athens, and hear the silvery tones of her chief magistrate; I shall mention only one. The pawky provost of a burgh of the extreme north, determined to see the whole, and yet not pay his half-guinea for a seat in one of the booths, had scrambled to the top of a tree at Greenside-Place, where he hung rocking like a crow's nest. As the King approached, the provost swung himself to one side, waving his bonnet, and screeching his huzza, in strains which would have scared all the owls in England; and when the mass and the movement of this loyalty were in full effect, they proved too mighty for the support, so that the pine and the provost fell prostrate before the King. Even this was not much heeded: the procession moved on, and the provost moved off.

At last the King came to the wicker-gate of the city, the keys were presented, the speech was spoken, and the crowd in a great measure melted away, by the majority hurrying away toward the Calton-Hill, whence they could command a view of the whole during almost a mile of its march. This

desertion fell like cold water upon the official men, and even the King himself seemed disappointed.

But the gloom and the disappointment were of no long duration, for no sooner did he turn the corner into St. Andrew's-street, than the mass of shouting and ecstatic people who hung upon the whole beetling side of the hill, and covered every part of the buildings, came upon him with a shock of joy and a touch of exultation, which made the cold state of the monarch give way to the warm feelings of the man. "My God! that is altogether overpowering!" said he, snatching off his hat and essaying to join in the cheer, but his voice faltered, and tears, which were not tears of sorrow, suffused his eyes, and watered his cheeks.

His reception when he landed had been confined, and the people were too near for giving vent to their feelings; and the delivering of the keys, though there was a crowd there because the King halted a little, was a piece of mummery, about which so reflective a people as the Scotch cared little; but when the King was discerned in Prince's-Street, when the living hill side beheld his approach, and when the assembled nation reflected that their Monarch was coming in peace to visit them,—it was then that Scotland welcomed the King, with a welcome which none that saw or heard it is likely ever to forget. The first shout was

astounding, and it rose and rung till it was answered by voices of joy over a wide circumference.

During all this time I had not seen the procession, but I heard of it from one who was close by the royal person all the time, and whose character for truth and feeling is recognised as well by the world of letters as by the world of men. I must confess that, choice and chosen as was my place, the occupation of it was a pretty severe trial on my patience; and when I first saw the yellow plumes of the Braidalbanes, and the tall and majestic form of their leader, issuing from behind the monument of David Hume, and heard the notes of their bag-pipes pealing "the Campbells are coming," I had almost wished myself a Highlander, and in the procession. The King soon arrived at the Palace, had a hurried interview with some of the officers of state, and then drove off for Dalkeith-House, there to pause and recover from the fatigue of the voyage, and the excitement of the procession.

THE ILLUMINATION, THE LEVEE AND COURT, AND THE LADIES.

"Ten thousand tapers shone; ten thousand lords,
And squires, and yeomen, hungry clerks, and churchmen,
Bended the supple knee; ten thousand ladies,
With eyes of love, lit up the nether skies."

Although each of these, no doubt, seemed to the

parties themselves of sufficient importance to add to the shelves of literature a new volume, instead of being confined to a single chapter or section, yet I am induced to bring the three into juxta-position, because I shall thereby preserve the unities,—have a beginning in light, a middle in somewhat of gruffness, if not of gloom, and an end as glorious as the congregated beauty of a whole nation, together with divers importations, could make it.

It may be thought that the burning of a certain number of candles, the hanging up of a certain number of coloured lamps, and the displaying of a few ill-daubed transparencies, could contain no trait of national character; and that therefore it ought to find no place in these pages. But there was, perhaps, no one scene during the whole solemnity which brought out the character of the Scotch more decidedly than the illumination of Edinburgh upon the evening after that on which the King landed. The town of Leith had indeed been both very generally and very finely illuminated on the evening before; but that haughty spirit of the Athens which makes her bear herself somewhat saucily toward all her compatriot (or if you will, com-*provosted*) cities and towns in general, and towards poor Leith in particular,—that spirit which made them taunt Leith with the translated side of the inscription, in the morning, made them reckon

it high treason against the majesty of the Athens to look at, or talk of, her illumination in the evening; and thus, although the thing was no doubt very fine, there were few to wonder, and still fewer to put that wonder upon record. When the Athens, however, hung out her physical lamps, the emblems of her metaphysical light, all came, all saw, and all admired. It was a novelty to me: the illumination was so general, the streets were so thronged, and the people were so orderly. No doubt, there were wanting that profusion of daubed transparencies, and dangling festoons, tagged with classic mottoes and allusions, ill-quoted and worse applied, which are found in other places; but here, again, his Majesty would have cause to exclaim, that the nation by which he was surrounded were all ladies and gentlemen. Excepting at the public buildings, the houses of official persons, the apartments of clubs and societies, and the houses of a few private individuals, the abode of peer and burgher were illuminated in the same style, and with the same brilliance. I waive the details as to who hung up a crown in white lamps, or a thistle in green and red, or who took up their motto in Latin, in English, or in Gaelic. I do not even dwell upon the general effect; for though, on account of the situations in Edinburgh, the state of the weather, and the zeal of all classes of the people,

that was as fine as possible,—it was the people themselves that were the sight. Natives and visiters, three hundred thousand of every rank, age, and sex, thronged the streets to such a degree, that it was difficult in many of them to get a sight either of the pavement or the carriage-way. This immense mass put one very much in mind of bees; their noise at any point was scarcely louder than the hum of those insects, and in their varied motions they clashed as little with each other. Instead of brawling and rangling, which almost invariably take place on such occasions, the most elegant escaped without a stain, and the most feeble without a jostle. The accommodation which they afforded each other in their progress was truly remarkable. When one came to any of the elevations so frequent in the streets of Edinburgh, one saw nothing but human beings, thick and reeling as the leaves in an autumnal whirlwind; and yet, if one chose, one's progress could be as rapid and almost as free of interruption as if the street had been deserted. I did not remark a face in the whole assemblage that did not express the feeling of being pleased itself, and the desire of communicating pleasure to all around it. Just as was the case on the day of his Majesty's entry, the conduct of the people was the same as if they had been engaged in a solemn and felicitous act of religious worship.

While the inhabitants of the Athens and their visiters were thus rejoicing in the light which themselves had kindled (a species of joy which, by the way, is peculiarly congenial to the said Athenians,) they whispered, as any unknown personage of sufficient size for a monarch moved through the crowd, that that personage could be none other than the King himself in disguise. Indeed, I am not sure but a considerable portion of that decorum which marked Edinburgh upon this occasion, was owing to the apprehension which every body had that the royal eye might be upon them, without their knowing any thing about it; but whatever might be the operating principle, whether a sense of decorum, or national or personal pride, the effect was equally striking, and the merit perhaps equally great, But still, though the illumination, especially when the spirit of the people is taken into the account, was a fine show, still it was only a show, and a show in which the King, or even the Athens, in her peculiar capacity, took no part, and in which official men cut no more figure than the common herd.

With the *levee* it was otherwise: that was one of the grand acts for which the King had been invited to Scotland; and it is utterly impossible to form even an idea of the hopes that were built upon it. From the very first blush of the business,

the regular thorough-going tories, (which, in Scotland, mean those who will take any public employment, and pocket any public money, however improperly or dirtily got,) fancied that the whole consequence of the land was to be entwined around their capacious heads, and the whole wealth of it crammed into their more capacious pockets; and thus, they had given themselves airs, at which an Englishman would have been perfectly thunderstruck. A very respectable and very independent proprietor of the county of Fife told me, that a personage who had acted as tell-tale of their village during the war, and who, for a long time after the peace, continued to sell plots (perhaps at a handsome discount) to the crown lawyers of Scotland, until the ministry put an end to the unavailing traffic, would occasionally be found pacing over his estate, tasting the soil of the fields, and noting down what he was to have sown in each of them, after the King should have put him in possession.

The people were quite full of stories of this kind; and I have no doubt that the desire of seeing how these men of high loyalty and higher hopes would act, was one of the chief causes that brought so many provincial people to the Athens; and that the humiliation that these persons met with was, next to the joy at seeing each other happy, one of the greatest boasts that the whole affair yielded.

Without a previous knowledge of the political system of Scotland,—the way in which the few vicegerents in the Athens gobble up the loaves and the fishes—how lesser men over the country snap at the crumbs—and how they all growl, and worry, and snarl at other folks, it is quite impossible to form an idea of the insolence by which the little men of office were actuated. As, however, I shall have to discuss this matter when I come to treat of the politics of the Athens, (for it is there that the centre and focus of the system exists,) it would be both premature and unintelligible to notice them here. Wherefore, I shall confine myself to what I saw and heard as touching the levee.

The night which preceded that eventful day was an anxious and unclosing one to the men of hope and of office, from all parts of Caledonia; and baron and bailie, parson, provost, and professor, great judge and small attorney, eloquent advocate and uneloquent scribe,—all that the land of heath, of herrings, and of black cattle, could produce, was, with proud but palpitating heart, bedecking and bedizening itself, in all sorts of dresses, official, courtly, and nondescript, in order that they might, in seemly array, kiss that Kaaba of all loyal men's worship, (and who would not be a loyal man upon such an occasion,) the hand of a king. Three dukes, the same tale of marquesses, sixteen earls,

a brace of viscounts, twenty-nine barons, a pair of right honourables, four great officers of state, sixteen judges of the land, twenty-two who were honourable, and eleven who lengthened the fag end of the Scottish household, were there. Besides seventy-seven baronets, twelve members of parliament, thirty-eight lords lieutenant, a hundred head of provosts, bailies, counsellors, and deacons, "after their kinds;" with as many parsons, professors, physicians, and pleaders, as were sufficient to convert, and cultivate, and cure, from plethora both of person and of purse, the whole British empire; together with military men, who had fought and who had not fought, proprietors or kinsmen of the soil, and burgesses, "simple persons," swelled the amount to not fewer than two thousand persons, who had to pass in wonderful procession before the wondering King. When it was considered, that the whole of this mighty and motly squad, charged with addresses to the number of nearly a hundred, each more loyal and laboured than another, had to pass muster, and read, and retire, in the space of one brief hour, it was apparent that the official men of Scotland would have to dance about and deliver themselves with somewhat more of alacrity, and somewhat less of that slow profoundity of bowing than is usually the case. Dreading that the addresses, from the importance of their contents, and

the orthoëpal powers of the readers, would of themselves have consumed more than a day, it was wisely resolved, that the persons who were charged with them should continue enceinte of them till the Monday, upon which day they should be allowed to deliver themselves before the throne, or behind it in the closet, according to their several conditions and importance; and thus the mighty tide of the levee was undisturbed by any prosing from parchment, and undisconcerted by any uncouthness of provincial speech. The muster of beast-drawn vehicles was tremendous; and, though the magisterial equipages were reduced in their number of cattle, those which they contained never looked so big in their lives as when they were in progress to the levee, or so little as when they were fairly there. A grievous mishap befel their worships the under-magistrates of Glasgow. The ruler of that city, who never bought or sold any thing less than a bale of cotton or a basket of figs, could not be expected to ride in the same carriage with the bailies, many of whom were fain to vend a sixpenny handkerchief, or an ounce of caraway seeds; so two carriages were prepared, the foremost for his lordship, and the hindermost for their not-lordships. The provost entered his state-coach, and both carriages simultaneously sought their places in the line of procession; the line threaded its way to the Holyrood; the provost alighted with

true magisterial dignity, and the door was opened to let the bailie train come forth of their waggon. They had vanished! "Where are my bailie bodies?" exclaimed the provost; "I knew they were taking a bit bowl to keep their hearts aboon; but I dinna reckon on their gettin' fou upon sic an occasion as this!" His lordship, however, was instantly relieved by a dozen of chairmen, hurrying across the area, while a well-known voice was bawling from each chair, "Where's the right and honourable lord provost o' the wast?" It would be endless to recount all the little accidents of this nature that rippled the swelling waves of official joy; but it would be unjust not to mention the wig and staff of Dundee's principal and vice. The wig of the principal which, ungainly as it was, was the most wise-looking thing about him, had been put under the curling irons before day-break, and thus was burned and cauterized to the lining in sundry places. These had been skilfully repaired with court-plaster of the most glossy black; and thus, in reply to sundry pityings of the lacerated head of the burgh, the official man was forced to make it known, that he was of peace-seeking disposition, and, instead of a broken head, had only got a burned wig. The staff of the vice was a matter yet more serious. It had a diamond head, and the wearer, when at home, contrived to

poke it under his left arm so skilfully, that it shone by all the world like the star of the order of the golden calf, at the button-hole of some foreign knight. The worshipful gentleman never dreamt that he would be prevented from bearing this splendid and symbolic staff into the presence of the King, and thus, in as far as stars were concerned, vying in magnitude with the monarch himself; but he was sadly disappointed, had to leave the sacred cudgel in charge of the cook at Mackay's Hotel, and thus grope his way to the royal presence as grim as a dark lantern.

Nothing could exceed in breadth of humour, the countenances of many of Scotland's important sons, as they came, with eyes and mouth set wide to worship and to wonder, into the presence-chamber. Not a few of them, when they raised their "leaden eyes that loved the ground," in lack-lustre astonishment, from the drab-coloured drugget which had been nailed down by Mr. Trotter as fit carpetting for their feet, beheld more kings than were exhibited to Banquo in the wizard glass. As is not unfrequent with men whose wits are neither great, nor altogether at home, not a few of them mistook the right one; and the portly Sir William Curtis, who was "dressed in tartan sheen," with a kilt marvellously scant in its longitude, and dangling a bonnet, in which was dis-

played a grey goose feather of the largest size, took the edge off the loyalty of a full third; while his great grace of Montrose, who was drudging at the honours of the day, monopolized another, leaving only thirty-three and one-third per cent. of the loyalty of Scotland to be inflicted directly upon the King. It is needless to tell how brief were the salutations: there were two thousand persons who had to make their entrée, their bow, and their exit, in about a hundred minutes, which was, as nearly as possible, one second to each act of each person; and thus, however discordant might be the bearing of the different *bodies*, the unity of time was admirably preserved. The ceremony came upon them like an electric shock, or rather they came upon it as moths come upon the flame of a candle,—a buz, a singe of the wings, and down they dropt into insignificance. "Hech, Sirs!" said a brawny yeoman from the kingdom of Fife, as he attempted in vain to squeeze his minimum of opera-hat upon his maximum of skull,—"Hech, Sirs! but its quick wark this! We might hae gotten a snuff wi' him at ony rate;" and, as he strode across the court, and found himself fairly without the great gate, he fumbled over his head-piece with his paws, saying, "I'm thankfu' that it's upo' my shouthers after a'!" Those who attended the civic authorities, who stuck to each other as closely as if

they had been in their council-chambers at home, wore faces of the most broad and boundless delight; for, of the men of more ample calibre, the tories looked black, because they were elbowed and perhaps outnumbered by the whigs in the presence of the King. Some of the clods of the valley lost themselves in the long galleries and cold corridors of the Holyrood; and, after all was over, and the fatigued Monarch had retired to Dalkeith, a few of them were heard at the windows bawling, like Sterne's starling, "I can't get out." So ended the levee; and the King and the people rested for the sabbath without any thing of remarkable occurrence.

On Monday the hearts of the address men were lifted higher than ever; and, as the rapid and dumb show in which they passed before the King on Saturday, had taken off the first and deepest blush of their bashfulness, they went to the court in very masterly style: foremost, were a hundred ministers of the Scotch kirk, supported by about fifty ruling elders of the same; who, having met in solemn conclave in the Canongate church, said to be the most composing and soporific in all Edinburgh, they moved "dark as locusts o'er the land of Nile" across the sanctuary, not of churchmen but of insolvent debtors, approached the presence, bowed themselves with more than priestly reve-

rence, and, by the mouth of David Lamont, D.D., their moderator, poured the honey and the oil of their adulation into the royal ear. Spirit of John Knox, wert thou then on the watch! and didst thou mark the silken cords in which thy degenerate sons were drawn to bend the knee before an earthly Monarch! Yes, how wouldst thou have exclaimed that the gold of the zeal of thy church had become dim, and the fine gold of its independence had changed, if thou hadst heard thy backsliding children tempering their temporizing address with the miry clay of earthly politics, calling the King "the bulwark of the church," and promising to labour, not for the conversion of sinners, or for the glory of Him whom thou didst account the only Head of the church, but "to impress upon the people committed to their care, a high sense of the invaluable blessings of the glorious and happy constitution?" But, boldest spirit of the reformation, be not offended,—Think on the difference of the times. The times in which your earthly lot was cast, were times of wrestling and of reformation,—they required the heart of steel, the eye that turns not aside, and the hand which is never slackened; but the lines of thy followers have fallen in pleasant places, they have become full of the fatness of the earth, and therefore they recline at their ease under the refreshing shadow of temporal power.

After the Scottish kirk, came, laden with wisdom, the members of the four Scottish universities; and this having been done, the remaining individuals and classes of men who were charged with courtly sayings, disburdened themselves in the closet behind the throne; and the paper thus accumulated, having been deposited for use, this act of the drama closed, leaving less upon the memory than had been anticipated.

The monarch having thus opened a levee for the honour of his Scottish subjects generally, and allowed her official men to drop their honeyed papers and parchments at the court and in the closet,—having devoted two whole days to the hard hands of country lairds, and the greasy lips of parsons and bailies, it was naturally to be concluded, that he would be pretty well saturated of salutation from the men of Scotland, and long for the approach of Scottish women, as the traveller, in the sandy desert longs for the green spot and the glassy spring. Nor could the desire have been wholly confined to his Majesty. The anxiety of the Scottish fair was bent, like the bow of Diana when the arrow is drawn to the barbs; their preparations, positive and negative, for this high honour, had been long, laborious, and self-denying; and they were not without feeling that four whole days should not have interposed their

twelve-month-looking-lengths between the sight and salutation of their King. It is true, that in Scotland generally, and in the Athens in particular, woman, that grand barometer of civilization, has of late risen many degrees. The time has not long gone by, at which females were mere beasts of burden in rural affairs, and young girls were in many places obliged to ply as ferry-boats. I myself have seen half a score of stout and sinewy Highlanders lying snuffing upon a hillock of manure, while their wives and daughters were bearing heavy baskets of the same to the fields, while all that the lords of the creation condescended to do was to fill the baskets; and I have been—no, I have not been, I was only offered to be—carried across sundry Highland rivers, upon the shoulders of the fairest nymphs which adorned their banks. But the Athens has got the better of all this, and her daughters have not only reduced the tyranny of their husbands to "flytings" and frailties, but have learned to pay them back with interest even in these. Thus the delay which had taken place in consequence of the grand parade of the men, and the small extra drill of the official men, by no means tended to lessen the commodity of curtain-lectures. There were other causes of vexation: the means by which a sufficiency of beauty had been procured were more precious than permanent;

the delay of hope not only made the heart sick, but tended to pucker the skin, and, what was more vexatious than all, these careful dames, after they had trimmed themselves for the royal salute, would submit themselves to the salutation of no mere man in the interim. Wherefore, if any casualty had prevented this glorious feast, or even protracted it, the *primum mobile* of the city might have stood still, and the Athens might have been the Athens no more.

It being the only time during a century and a half, at the least, when the daughters of Scotia have had the flattering opportunity of flaunting their trains, flourishing their plumes, bowing in the presence of Majesty, and, finally, giving their cheeks to the glory and honour of the royal basial salutation, and certainly the only time when a native royal drawing-room has been held in Scotland, since she had either much wealth or population to display,—it is not to be wondered at, that it produced corresponding anxiety among the fair. A random female here and there may, no doubt, have been in the royal presence, and there may be one or two cheeks which have before been made happy by the royal impress; but the greater, by far the greater part of the roses and lilies of Scotland were, up to this happy 21st of August, 1822, in virgin, but pitiable, ignorance of so much honour

It is not to be wondered at, then, that the preparations of this eventful day had their sources remote in the past, and the hopes of the fair ones groped their way far into the future; and if they had not made themselves gay upon the occasion, it would have been alien alike to the honour of their country and the disposition of the sex. Morning, noon, and night, had accordingly been spent at the mirror, and many a projection had been squeezed, and furrow smoothed, in order that for "Scotland's glory," and their own, they might appear as splendid, as gay, and as bewitching as possible, in the presence of their King and his nobles, and their own admirers. All this was most laudible: and as the fair ones, with their eyes, their candles, and their mirrors, literally frightened the reign of "old Night," they merited forgivenes though they encouraged a little of that of "Chaos".

So much of the fire of Scotland's moral electricity, moving in such prime conductors, could not be supposed to confine either itself or its effects to the earth. Ere gray dawn, the sky wept at the eclipse of so many of its moons and stars by the radiance of the Venuses and Lunas of the Athens rising to their culmination; and as it had not recovered in the morning, there was somewhat of pains-taking and pouting ere the coaches and chairs could receive the whole of their delectable

burdens. Still, however, the ceremony was one which could not be put off, and so the ocean-swell of beauty collected, and nathless the drizzling rain, poured its eager tide towards the palace. When they arrived at the entrée-room, some of the colloquies which they held with each other were not a little amusing. If I could judge from the general strain of what I heard of them, the kiss—the downright and *bona-fide* smack at royalty, without any of the leaven even of suspicion in it, was the thing which pleased them the most. Each was making sure too, (for there is a wonderful foresight in the women of Scotland as well as in the men,) that the jealousy which this high honour would excite, would procure a goodly harvest of future salutation. Some female Humes (not in name but in nature,) were propounding "sceptical doubts" upon the subject; and stating, with tears in their eyes, and terror on their brows, their apprehension, that it would be "but a sham after a'."

One great object with the Caledonian fair seemed to be to prevent, as much as they could, the possibility of the ceremony's being bungled, through the youth or inexperience of those who were to apply it. It had indeed been rumoured that the King hated all lips but such as had been mellowed by the suns, and mollified by the frosts, of

forty seasons, and that young girls, as smelling of bread and butter, were peculiarly offensive to the royal organs; whereupon it was said, that the young maidens of Scotland were enjoined to abstain from the ceremony altogether, and that the full grown ones abstained from bread and butter during the whole period of their drill.

In consequence, while there never was a royal drawing-room so fresh and new in the dresses and ignorance of the fair attendants, there never perhaps was one in which the appearance of those attendants themselves was more sage and matured. Every lonely tower, in a remote glen, around whose gray battlements the hollow wind had whistled, "Nobody coming to marry me," for more returnings of the fallen leaf than it would be seemly to mention, poured forth its tall and time-learned damsels,—erewhile as gray as its walls, but now as green as the lichen with which they are incrusted, and as gorgeous as the sun whose beams find out the old tower the more easily, and gild them the more copiously, in proportion to the leaflessness of all around. With those mingled the dowagers and despairers of George's Square, upon the thresholds of whose doors, and the graves of whose hopes, the grass had for more than moons waxed green apace. Nor were there wanting a few of somewhat more juvenile an aspect; abundance

of manœuvring dames, who had exposed the precious wares of their own manufacture at all the marts and bazaars in the island; with other languishing and loving ladies whose number it were difficult to count.

But, in their zeal to suit the royal taste in the maturity of the greater part of the muster, they had rather overshot the mark. If the tale of that taste says sooth, the word "forty," which is to be found in every country, and, which, in single dignity and desire, is found more abundantly in Scotland, and especially in the Athens, than in any country, is preceded by the words "fat and fair," which, in that land, and pre-eminently in that city, are among the *desiderata*. Hence, there perchance was never collected before a pair of royal eyes so many tall, gaunt, and ungainly figures, and never offered to the salutation of a pair of loyal lips, so many sunken and sinewy cheeks. In their costumes, they were uncommonly splendid: sweeping trains of white satin, over spangled robes of various fancies, (in nowise emblematical of "white without and spotted within,") were the predominant costumes; and, in number and in magnitude, the plumes of feathers which waved and nodded above, might have furnished all the beds, bolsters, and pillows, to the court of Og, the giant king of Bashan. In the dresses, too, there were all the ad-

vantage of contrast with the wearers: the one were as fresh and as new as the others were furrowed and old. And this did not escape the discriminating eye of the King, who, though he prudently abstained from all commendation on the score of beauty, was copious on that of cleanliness.

In their previous estimate of the royal taste, they had not calculated with their usual wisdom. To the more sage and skinny dames, the appulse was so slight and so brief, that before the agitation was over, the impression was gone; and, of the whole that attended, only one little and lovely girl could boast of a palpable and positive kiss.

I could not help being struck with the extreme solemnity of the whole. There was none of that jaunty lightness of step, and that soft and flexible twining of body, which I have remarked on similar occasions in other places. The whole moved on, solemn and erect, as though it had been the Scotch Greys approaching to a charge, or the Forty-second to a crossing of bayonets. Their features expressed intelligence in many instances, and pride in all, but I saw not such that I could call beauty. Their looks were highly characteristic: they were staid even to demureness, and they sailed toward the state apartment without a single movement of the eyes, or any thing which could be called a smile upon the countenance. Never perhaps did

so great and so mingled an assembly of females display so much modesty,—modesty too which was not the modesty of subdued fire, but that of coal which seemed capable of resisting all powers of ignition. In the elder ones, the mouth had a character which no one could overlook: the days of labour which had been spent in giving plumpness to the lip were, in a great measure, rendered unavailing, by the force with which the corners of the mouth were drawn back, and the firmness with which its thread-like furnishings were brought together. It seemed indeed that they had been anxious to bring as much of this commodity to the solemnity, and set it apart as exclusively as possible for the use of their sovereign; for, fearful of deficiency in plumpness and breadth, they had laboured to make up for it in an extension of length; and two deep and decided curves, hedged it in, as though for the time it had been parenthetical,—set apart to the service of the King, and fortified by fosse and rampart against all the rest of the world.

The space which could be allotted to each for the doing of a salutation was excessively brief; and what with the solemnity of the ladies, and the scowling of the heavens, it had more the air of a funeral procession than of a festive assembly. When it was over, or perhaps a little before, the

daughters of Caledonia found out, that though they could be gorgeous at a drawing-room, they could not be gay. They did not indeed look like "fishes out of the water; but they looked like fishes that had never been in it. It was so novel in itself, and they had so exhausted themselves in the preparation, that the parade itself was gloomy; and though it furnished abundant evidence of the existence of high talents and higher pride among them, it also afforded proof that time and change would neither be idle nor in haste, if they were to be thoroughly prepared for gliding and glittering at court.

Themselves and their male relatives seemed indeed to have been aware of this,—to have known that there was another and more appropriate arena for the displaying of them to advantage; and, though it had not been set forth in the gazette, I could have discovered, from the looks of speculation that were quietly exchanged in the proximity, and even in the presence, of majesty, that there would be a chapter of the Highland fling. Those tender telegraphings were as new to me as any part of the proceedings; and they led me to observe the unique and characteristic nature of a modern Athenian ogle.

The Athenian damsels, or dames, as it happens, cannot have so many of the soft propensities of the

flesh as their more plump neighbours of the south, not having so much flesh wherein the same may be contained; but, from all that I could discover, they have not, upon the whole, less of the *mater amoris* in them; and being a more firm and substantial matter—more "bred in the bones" as it were, it is perchance more deep and more durable. Thus, while the dimple of an English cheek tells its soft tale of love, the jutting angle of an Athenian cheek-bone hints at the same; and there is often more amatory demonstration in a single Caledonian wrinkle, than in all the blushes of the most blooming dame southward of the Tweed. The extreme vigilance, too, with which the ladies of the Athens watch each other, and especially the cat-like lurkings which the plain and decaying have for those who have more of the species and are more in the season of bloom, gives a wariness to the character of every woman within that metropolis, and makes even the most accredited and creditable love an affair of mystery and intrigue. If a gentleman is detected walking with or speaking civilly to one lady, eyes, from loop-holes of which he dreams not, are instantly upon him, and the affair is handed about from coterie to coterie, as a marriage, or as something worse; while, if he is seen with two or more, he is a Don Juan of the first magnitude, and they, "poor dear lost things,

are—very much to be pitied indeed." So far as I know, they have no tendency to pity themselves in such cases; but this may be the very reason why they have so much of it to spare to their neighbours.

This propensity could not be restrained even by the counter-excitation of the royal presence; and while everybody upon whom the King was pleased to smile at the shows (and he was graciously pleased to smile upon a great number) was *pitied*, or, as it might have been, *envied*, as the object of regal flirtation, those blowsy country sisters and cousins, whom awkward accountants and spruce scribes kept lumbering along the streets upon the resting days, were, in the bitterness of the Athenian anguish, set down as spouses soon to be.

A handsome young gentleman from the south, whose form promised love, and whose appearance bespoke the wherewithal to support it, had brought down his mother and three sisters to amuse themselves, and see the sights. The matron, though her family were come to what are in the Athens termed the "years of discretion," has still as much bloom as half a score of the six-flight-of-stairs virginity of that city; and, it so happened, that there was no family resemblance either in form or features among the young people. The gentleman appeared at one place with his mother, at another

place with one or other of his sisters, sometimes with two, and sometimes with the whole; and the quantity of speculation, and wonder, and pity, and lamentation, which his so appearing excited, would have drained the tears, and exhausted the words of fifty Jeremiahs.

All those circumstances are enough, and more than enough, to impose upon the amatory signals of the Athenians a closeness and caution, of which those who live in a more free and liberal state of society can form no conception; and while they thus force the people to put on the semblance of intrigue where there is no necessity for it, they at the same time forward the reality of intrigue in cases of which perhaps scarcely another people would dream; and thus, in consequence of the very rigour of the external laws of decorum, the Athenians are, perchance, in fact and in secret, the most indecorous in the whole island of Great Britain,—the which would lead one fond of scandal and of similes to conclude, that the white trains and the spangled robes were not chosen in vain; but I am a novice in both, and therefore I shall say nothing about the matter.

The exhibition of faces and forms, and the actual contact with royalty, not being sufficient either to show off or to satisfy the ladies of Scotland, they resolved to make the general attack upon the King

with their heels; and, as the Athens contained no hall ample enough for showing off the whole at once, and further, as the same parties might be shown off twice under different appellations, once as the planets of the peerage, and again as the comets of Caledonia, the assembly rooms in George Street were destined to be twice trodden by the same feet, in the two enactings of the Peers' ball, and the Caledonian ball. These were not consecutive; but it will be no great anachronism to bring them together.

The Peers' ball took place in the assembly rooms, on the evening of Friday the 23d of August; and, as there the people were more at home, and more employed than in the merely state ceremonies, its effect was at once more pleasing and more characteristic.

The portico of the rooms was tastefully illuminated, the columns being wreathed, and the pediments outlined, with golden-tinted lamps,—the emblems of royalty shining in the centre. The pillars in the ante-room were twined with flowers, surmounted by emblematical tablets, over which the dome glowed with coloured lights. The principal room, tea-room, and refectory, were very handsome: the first had a platform and throne, covered with crimson; the second was ornamented with paintings, in water-colour; and the third was

well stored with viands. The whole was simple, but there was an air of freshness, neatness, and good taste about it. At rather an early, hour, say eight o'clock, the elegantes began to pour in, and the people to throng to the adjoining street, in order to catch a glimpse of their fair forms and nodding plumes. By nine o'clock, the rooms were completely filled, and the downy feathers which now reeled to and fro in mid air, with the mingling darker lines of the other sex, and the sheen of tartan and gold lace, and ribbon, and star, and spangle, waved "like wave with crest of sparkling foam." If Scotland had honour from the general appearance and conduct of the people upon this occasion, she had glory in her daughters. If they had not the light heart and laughing eye of the daughters of the south, they were fully equal to them in dignity and intellectual beauty. Their dresses were elegant rather than splendid, and their movements had perhaps as much of stateliness as of grace. The sustained and chastened joy which they all displayed, and the keen glance of intellect and national pride, which mingled with their mirth, threw an interest over it, which is unknown in lands of lighter skies, and warmer suns. The noblemen and gentlemen were in every variety of dress (meaning, of course, every elegant variety). The duke of Hamilton was splendidly attired in the Douglas

tartan. And *Mac Cailin Mhor* was most conspicuous in the broad bands of the *Sliabh nan Diarmid.* The chiefs, too, were in their various tartans; but Sir William appeared in a plain court suit, abandoning the applying of "the kelt aërial to his anglian thighs," with as much care as he would watch not to let "lignarian chalice, filled with oats, his orifice approach," His majesty came at half after nine, just when the rooms were in the height of their splendour. He was greeted with a cheer by the people outside, and most respectfully received by those within. He remained about an hour, and then retired. Immediately after his departure, the company passed to the supper-room by sections, but without any distinction of rank.

I detail not the dancing, of which, by the way, there was much less than of promenading; but, in general, they were national enough, to "eschew both waltz and quadrille, and addict themselves to the good old orthodox fling." In this their favourite and characteristic movement, they showed equal firmness of foot and flexture of limb; and though the room thinned a little upon his majesty's departure, the evolutions were continued till full three hours beyond the "keystane o'night's black arch," and thus according to every canon of witchery, the charms of the ladies were overpower-

ing and triumphant. Notwithstanding the great concourse of people, and the closeness with which they were wedged together, there was no confusion; and though a guard of cavalry was in readiness, it was not in the slightest degree required.

The Caledonian Hunt ball, which followed some evenings afterwards, had little of novelty in it, further than that the hunters were habited in a new uniform of royal invention; and that a sort of cage of brass wire permitted the whole wondering and waltzing charms of Scotland to view the King, and at the same time prevented them from pressing upon him with that ardent closeness which had oppressed and over heated the royal person upon the former occasion. This ball closed what may be considered as the exhibition of the King to the people of Scotland generally; and with it, I shall close this long Section.

THE PILGRIMAGE, THE FEAST, THE CHURCHING, AND THE THEATRE.

"March! march! pinks of election."—OLD SONG.
"Now the King drinks to Hamlet."—SHAKSPEARE.
"The sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with."—ISAIAH.
——————"The play's the thing
Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the King."—
SHAKSPEARE.

In the preceding Sections of this Chapter, I have given a skeleton of all those acts of the royal

drama, in which the whole people of Scotland were supposed to take a part, and in which the Athens had no farther peculiar concern than as her locality furnished the scene, and the pride of her leading men (and women) thrust them forward among the actors. In this Section I shall have to notice those doings of which I have just cited the titles, and which may be considered as more particularly expressing the spirit, or, if you will, displaying the form of the Athens herself. In treating of these, I shall be able to be more brief, not because they ought to be considered as at all inferior in interest, but because, under other forms and titles, they will have again to come under review.

The pilgrimage from the Holyrood to the castle, and by Princes Street back to the Holyrood, seemed, to judge from the state of the weather, to be peculiarly alarming or offensive to the "prince of the power of the air," as well as to the monarch of the British isles. In all the former doings there had been something beyond the mere parading in the street. The procession from Leith was a matter of necessity, and furthermore it was exceedingly novel and interesting in itself; the levee, the court, and the drawing-room, were part of the usual machinery of the state; the court before the throne, and the closet behind, for the receipt of

addresses, "according to their generations," were what the addressing parties could not have been happy without; and though these had been disappointed of the honours and rewards which they had fondly expected would result at the time, yet they fondly hoped that they had "done a do" which would lead to great things in the sequel; and even the dances had brought folks together, and might also have their fruits thereafter; but that the King should be drawn along the whole length of the Cannon-gate and High Street, work his way through the ugly gates and awkward passages to the half-moon battery of the castle, then pull off his hat, give three cheers in concert with the bawlings of the crowd, and then go back to Holyrood by a more circuitous route, was so profound a piece of wisdom,—so much a masterstroke of the good taste of the Great Unknown, and the sage politics of the Athenian tories, as to be by much too deep even for royal comprehension. It seemed too, that none of those counsellors which the King had taken with him from England could fathom its profundity. Sir William Curtis indeed pleaded the lord mayor of London's pilgrimages to Kew and Rochester Bridge, as being precedents exactly in point; but those who knew the etiquette of courts better, scouted all precedence which could originate within Temple Bar,—partly, because they

originate with those who arrogate to themselves the power of closing that gaping portal against the King, and, partly, because nothing possessed in the city is at all acceptable but its money. The King himself scouted the pilgrimage as a piece of idle foolery: declared, that he had seen the assembled people in his progress to the palace; that he had received the noblemen, gentlemen, official men, and addressing men, at levees and courts; that he had sustained a general attack of the ladies at the drawing-room, and sundry particular attacks at the dances; and that, if his Scottish subjects were not yet satisfied with gazing at him, he would hold other levees and other drawing-rooms till the humblest boors, burghers, and baillies, with their wives, should pass muster before him, provided it were done as a King ought to do such things, in his state apartments at Holyrood; but, that to have him shown along the streets, as they would show an elephant or a prize ox, would be a degradation both to himself and his subjects. Having, as was said, expressed himself thus, he sped away for Dalkeith with even more than wonted alacrity, wishing that he could be permitted to spend his days in a way somewhat more agreeable to good sense and his own inclinations.

The pilgrimage had, however, been resolved on, and those bodies which it was judged expedient

that the King should wonder at, in their collective capacities, had clubbed their half-guineas, and erected their booths along the whole line of the High Street; and as all this had been done without consulting the King, it was resolved to *boo* and beseech him into compliance. The King, who had previously known the persevering nature of the political "seekers" of the Athens, judged that the easiest way would be to comply with their request, although, during the whole pilgrimage, I thought he appeared to feel that what his politeness had made him content to do, could add nothing to his kingly dignity.

By this time I had become so little apprehensive of arrowless bows, and dirks never intended to be unsheathed, and so much accustomed to tartans and tails, that I pushed myself into the very centre of the procession; and as there was nothing better I could do, I contrived, by putting a bold face upon it, and huzzaing, as well to demonstrate my loyalty as to keep myself warm in the rain, to proceed to the rampart of the half-moon battery, close by the side of the King.

As this was the occasion upon which the *people* of the Athens were to make their nearest approach to their Sovereign, the preparations for it were correspondingly general. Notwithstanding the unpropitiousness of the morning, the streets, booths,

windows, and house-tops, were thronged at an early hour. The members of all the trades, corporations, and friendly societies, came pressing to the line of the progression by about eleven, and formed a double line for the progress, each well-dressed, and armed with a white wand; behind them, in varied phalanx, was that part of the *posse comitatus* which could not afford to pay for windows or seats, and here and there stood a special constable, or Fifeshire yeoman, mounted. Outside, the ten-storied houses of the High Street were tapestried with human faces; and to prevent disturbance, all the cross-streets were filled by cavalry. About one, the procession began to form in the area of Holyrood, and the progress commenced a little after two. The procession was formed of nearly the same individuals who composed that on the King's landing, and they held nearly the same places. There was one addition, however, which excited a good deal of interest: the ancient regalia of Scotland, the *crown*, said to have been made for the Bruce, and thus doubly dear as a national relic, and the sceptre and sword of state. The regalia were borne immediately in front of the royal carriage. First, the sword of state, borne by the Earl of Morton, in lord-lieutenant's uniform; then the sceptre, by the Hon. John Morton Stuart, second son to the Earl of Moray; and last, the

crown, by the Duke of Hamilton, in right of the Earldom of Angus.

During the whole progress along the High-Street it rained, and thus the spectacle was a good deal injured; but still, the immense crowd of people, their orderly conduct, their happy faces, the immense height at which some of them were posted, the gorgeous array of the cavalcade, and, as much as any thing, the antique grandeur of the street, had a fine effect. The King was every where greeted by shoutings, not loud, but sustained; and he conducted himself with dignity. Next to the King, the object of attention was the Duke of Hamilton, who was cheered along the whole line, partly on his own account, and partly from his carrying the ancient symbol of Scottish independence. It was well that the first time that symbol was borne publicly in the streets of the Scottish capital, after having been missing for a century, should have been in the hands of a nobleman who feels for, and supports the remnant of that independence. The robes of the Lord Lyon were so fine, and his coronet so showy, that he was by many of the people mistaken for the King; nor did the beautiful black barb which bore the Knight Mareschal want its due share of admiration.

Upon the King's leaving the Cannon-gate, and passing the building where, in English, in Latin,

and in Greek, is recorded the escape of John Knox from assassination, several buxom and well-dressed damsels scattered flowers in the street, the music in the mean time playing the King's Anthem. The Tron-kirk and St. Giles' successively tingled their bells, and every thing demonstrated the satisfaction of the people. The *bodies* which had their booths about St. Giles' now did reverence, and lifted their voices just as his Majesty was passing over the spot which long groaned beneath the mass of the Heart of Mid-Lothian. When the King had arrived at the Castle-Hill, the procession turned aside, and he passed between the assembled *counties*, who were very fervent in their demonstrations of joy. He alighted on a platform covered with crimson, received the keys from the Governor, returned them, walked over the draw-bridge with a few of his train, was received there by the grenadiers of the 66th, entered his carriage, (all his attendants on foot,) and drove to the Half-Moon battery, where, from a platform erected for the occasion, it was hoped that he would have enjoyed a *coup-d'œil* of the whole loyalty and beauty of Edinburgh.

The day, however, was very unfavourable—a fog shrouded the city, and it rained heavily; still, the King stood up, waved his hat, and spoke to the people, while the cannon from the lower batteries

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of the Castle, and from the Calton-hill, and Salisbury Crags, told the news. Dark as was the scene, it was most sublime. Through one opening of the clouds, one could catch a glimpse of Arthur's Seat; through another, the smoke of a cannon from the Crags, and through a third, some tower or turret of the city. Among these, by the way, the finest is the monument erected in St. Andrew's-square, to the late Lord Melville. It is a fluted Doric column, with a rich base and capital, and most appropriately surmounted by a bee-hive, in testimony, doubtless, of the countless friends and relatives for whom the noble lord had the means of providing. When the King had escaped from the pleasure of this inspection, he filed off for Dalkeith-House, and the *pecus*, who had been ducked and delighted, retired to evaporate the external moisture by moisture within. The *plebs* of different places have different modes of expressing their joy or their grief; those of the Athens, whatever be their rank or denomination, and whether in weal or in woe, close the most social as well as the most sad of their exhibitions, by pouring out a drink-offering, and pouring it out abundantly.

I must now say something of that act of the royal drama in which the official and loyal men of Scotland gave, before the King, ocular demonstra-

tion of how substantially they could eat, and how copiously they could drink. Eating and drinking are, in all civilized countries, and more especially, perhaps, in the British dominions, so closely allied with loyalty, that the basin and the bowl would perhaps be its most appropriate symbols. Corporations have ever been pre-eminent for those demonstrations of support to the throne; and as the Athenian corporation is pre-eminent among corporations in the northern part of this island, so the feastings of that corporation have ever been the fullest and the fattest.

A feast of the corporation of the Athens is a thing altogether different from a feast of the corporation of London. In both places it is, no doubt, more sentient than sentimental; and the belly must be put to sleep ere the soul be awakened to heroic deeds; but a feast of the corporation of London is, notwithstanding all its abundance, a merely plebeian thing,—it emanates from the people, is partaken of by the people, and if royal or courtly persons be there, they are in the humble attitude of guests. It is a matter, in short, not only different from, but in opposition to, those cold collations which obtain in the kingly circles; and it is calculated to inspire the people more with sentiments of independence, and a consciousness of their own worth, than with that bowing

down of the honour for the sake of rising in office, and that beggaring of the heart for the sake of filling the purse with the gains of office, which invariably accompany banquets of exclusive loyalty. The feastings of the Athenian corporation, on the other hand, are feastings which the people do not originate, and of which they are not allowed to partake. They are of two kinds,—which may be distinguished as well as characterized by the two epithets of "dinners of the flagon," and "dinners of the scrip;" the former having reference to nothing else than the filling of the belly, the latter having an ultimate view to the replenishing of the purse. The feast of the flagon is by much the more ancient; it is characteristic of the whole genus of corporation men; and it is because they have a much greater propensity to feed the flesh than either to cultivate or to exercise the understanding, that corporations are every where denominated *bodies*,—as much as to say, that though they may have souls, these are not worth taking into the account. In ancient times, when kings held their regular courts in Scotland, and when these eclipsed all that could be done by the delegated moons of the Athenian corporation, that corporation had the same leaning toward the people which other corporations near the seat of royalty are supposed to possess, and in those days the feast of the flagon

was almost the only one known to the corporation men of the Athens. Now, however, as the royal household in Scotland has become a mere cipher, and since the second-hand vessels into which the delegation of the royal authority has been poured have become such as not easily to be contaminated by any association, the feasts of the scrip—a sort of chubbing of stomachs and of tongues among all the Attic worthies, have come into use, more and more in proportion as the times have been more and more trying and troublesome, and the price of the expression of loyalty has been enhanced, upon the ground of its alleged scarcity;—since this has been the case, a complete separation has taken place even in the feasts of the flagon, between the corporated bodies and the uncorporated spirits of the Athens; and in this the "bodies" have found ample compensation, in the greater frequency of their own peculiar gastronomizings, as well as in the tagging of themselves to the tails of the Lord-President, the Lord-Advocate, and the Lord knows who—keeper for the time being of the secret influence of Scotland,—who at all times form the tripod upon which the incense-pot of Scottish loyalty is sustained.

No better idea of the nature and occasions of the feasts of the flagon can be given than the well-known one of the bell-rope of the Tron Kirk.

For many years, a bell, which had been carefully cracked, lest the sound of it should disturb the official men, whose evening retreats were deeply buried in the different closes, was tolled at the tenth hour of every night to warn the populace from the streets, for fear they should interrupt the march of that puissant corps of the city-guard, who paraded the streets after that hour with bandy legs and battle-axes, to conduct such of the lieges as could afford to pay for it to any place of amusement they had a mind to visit. Nightly exercise had worn the rope by which this bell was put in motion: it broke one evening, and fell upon the head of a bailie who was passing, rebounded from that without doing any damage, but floored an Athenian damsel who was under his worship's protection. This was, of course, not to be borne; wherefore a council was summoned, and a feast of the flagon ordered; and when they had made themselves happy, they resolved to adjourn till that day se'nnight, at which time they were to meet and feast again, and receive estimates as to the expense of purchasing a new rope and of splicing the old one. Having dined a second time, they read the estimates, which were half-a-crown for the new rope, and eighteen-pence for splicing the old. A matter of so much importance could not be settled at one meeting of council; wherefore, a second

adjournment and a third dinner were resolved upon. After that third dinner, the tavern-bill, thirty-three pounds, six shillings, and eight pence, for each of the three dinners, and the two estimates as aforesaid, were laid upon the table. The treasurer of the city was ordered first to pay the tavern-bill, and then to give orders that the old rope should be spliced, because that would be a saving of the public revenue, of which, as faithful stewards, they ought to be provident. The feasts of the scrip, again, are different,—bearing a great resemblance to those associations of placemen, parsons, and public stipendiaries, who from time to time meet all over the country, and spend the price of a dinner with the same intention, and to the same effect, that a farmer sprinkles grain in the furrows of his field,—that in due time it may yield an abundant increase. During the war, no sooner was a victory heard of, than away flew those supporters of the Crown to a tavern, bumpered and bawled, till their loyalty and every thing else appeared double, and then trotted off to beg a share of the honour and emolument. If a tax or a scarcity pressed sore upon the people, those persons were at their dining again, partly with a view of diminishing the quantity of provision that might fall into the hands of the enemy; partly because themselves are ever more courageous in their cups;

and partly because a report of their doings at a dinner would sound much better than a report of their doings any where else.

Men who had thus from time immemorial rested not only their civic and their political importance, but almost their civic and political existence, upon their capacity for dining, in whom it was most likely the greatest wisdom to do so, could not be expected to let his Majesty eat his venison and drink his *Glenlivet* (which unfortunately had been both furnished by a Whig) at his ease in Dalkeith-House, but would needs have him see with his own eyes with what zeal they could cut into a buttock of beef, and with what alacrity they could drain a goblet of wine, for the glory and the establishment of his throne. Accordingly, as the following Sunday would be a day of rest, the civic and other authorities in the Athens resolved that a feast of fat things should be furnished forth in the great hall of the Athenian Parliament House, upon Saturday the 24th of August. In preparing the hall for this occasion, not only had the whole of the Athens been spoiled of its decorations, but they had been forced to borrow largely at all the loyal houses in the vicinity. And as it was in old times the custom for every guest at the humbler Scottish parties to be provided with his own spoon, his own knife, and his own pair of five-pronged forks, so upon the

present occasion it might be said, that each noble or loyal visiter lent his ice-pail or his pepper-box. This hall, which is as it were the vital principle of the Athens, the place where the tongues of all her speakers are loosed, the pockets of all her quibblers filled, the curiosity of all her gossips gratified, and the eyes and wishes of all her fair directed—was made more gay than ordinary for the occasion; and in the selection of guests, so far as that could be controlled, care was taken that none should be present who could in any wise eclipse in wisdom, or in elegance, the loyal lords of Scotland and of the Athens. Feasting, however motley and contrasted the feasters, is not a subject to be written about, but, as is perhaps the case with music and with painting, it is a mere matter of temporary sensation. Still, however, those who know the strange materials out of which an Athenian corporation is formed, (and I shall tell those who do not know by and by,) can easily conceive what an ungainly breadth of delight the lower extremities of that corporation would feel in being allowed to gorge themselves till their buttons were starting again, in the very presence of the King. It was pleasing for them, too, to hear the notes of flutes and fiddles issuing from those crypts and holes about the hall, whence no sounds are accustomed to issue but the droanings of the law. The King, with his selected

(I am not bound to say select) guests, had a sort of line of partition, but all "below the salt," there seemed to be no law of aggregation. The man who had fought at almost every degree of the earth's circumference sat in close juxta-position with him who had warred merely with words; he who had done what in him lay to pull down the glory of the old Athens, was amid those who would copy that glory for the new; the sinecurist was at the very ear of him by whom all sinecures are denounced; he who had ploughed the wave was companion to him who had only tilled the ground; and the peer and the bailie were on the most friendly footing. Nor was the varied *status* in life and expression of countenance, the only thing which gave richness to the harmony. The sober blush of the heads of the Kirk, and the sombre gowns of the Edinburgh magistrates, made a fine contrast with the brightness of stars and ribbons, and epaulettes and lace, and the mingling colours of the Celtic chiefs. There were not many in the Highland garb: the Earl of Fife, Sir Even Mac Gregor, and the Macdonald, were the only three that fell under my inspection; and from the number of uniforms that every where predominated, the party had a good deal of a military air.

In the arrangements too, the senses of the civic authorities, which are not upon any occasion very

great, appeared to be a little bewildered; for there was no page to carry a bumper from the royal cup to the Mordecais "whom the King delighted to honour."

The only peculiarity of the feast, apart from the number and variety of the guests, was the *reddendo* of William Howison Craufurd, of Braehead, who came with a basin and water, that his majesty might wash his hands immediately after he had satisfied himself of the dainties before him. There was a certain knot of persons who struck me as being determined to monopolize the whole attention of the King; and, upon the present occasion, two awkward boys, one a son and the other a nephew of the Great Unknown, assisted the laird of Braehead in carrying the basin and ewer, but they came and went unheeded. The tradition upon which this service of the basin is founded is worth repeating.

All the Jameses who lived and died kings of Scotland were fond of being their own spies; and for this purpose, as well as for other purposes, they were in the habit of travelling the country disguised and alone; upon which occasions their doings had more of love or of war in them, according to the disposition of the royal incognito. The rambles, and amours, and songs, of James V. are well known, and so are some of the brawls and

battles of James II., not the second of England, who fought by mercenaries for the purpose of slavery, but the second of Scotland, who occasionally fought in prize battles with his subjects, by way of experiment as to whether the sinews of a man or a monarch were the better knit.

Upon one occasion, a gang of gypsies assailed him at Cramond, a few miles west of Edinburgh; and, though he fought long and desperately, he was beaten down. A ploughman, of the name of Howison, who was threshing in a barn not far off, heard the noise, ran toward the place, and seeing one man assailed, down, and all but defeated, by so many, began to belabour the gypsies with his flail; and, having great strength and skill at his weapon, soon put the gypsies to flight, lifted up the King, carried him to his cottage, presented him with a towel and water to remove the consequences of the fray, and then, declaring that himself was "master there," set the stranger at the head of his humble board. "If you will call at the castle of Edinburgh," said the stranger, "and ask for Jamie Stuart, I will be glad to return your hospitality." "My hospitality," said the farmer, "is nae gryte things in itself; and it was gien without ony thought o' a return, just as nae doot you wad hae done to me in the same tacking; but I am obliged to you for your offer, and wad like to see the

castle at ony rate. The King is a queer man, they say, and has queer things about him." The stranger upon this took his departure; and the rustic was well pleased with the idea that he would get a sight of the inside of that strong and majestic pile, of which he had so long admired the exterior.

A few days afterwards he repaired to the castle, inquired for "ane Jamie Stuart, a stout gude-lookin chield, that could lick a dozen o' gypsies, but not a score," was admitted, and ushered into an apartment, the splendour of whose furniture, and the number of whose company, bewildered him not a little. At last, however, he recognised his old guest Jamie Stuart, went up to him, shook him heartily by the hand, inquired how he did, and expressed a very earnest wish to see the King, if such an honour was at all possible for a man of his condition. "The King is present now," said Jamie Stuart, "and if you look round, you will easily know him, for all the rest are bareheaded." "Then, I'm thinkin' it maun either be you or me," said Howison, pulling off his bonnet, which till then his astonishment had prevented him from thinking of; "and, as our acquaintance has begun by my fighting for you, I had better keep to that when you need it, and let you keep to bein' King." "Then, as you are so true and so trusty," replied the monarch, "you shall ride home the laird of

Braehead." "I like that better than twa kingdoms," said Howison, "but I canno' accept o' sae much even frae your majesty, without gien' something for't." "Well, then," said the King, "as long as we are kings of Scotland and lairds of Braehead, let you and your's present to me and mine, a basin and towel to wash our hands, whenever we ask for it."

This was the only occurrence which took place to break the dull activity of the dinner. But when the cup circulated, a ceremony was performed which delighted the corporation-men of the Athens, and made the other corporation-men all over Scotland sad through sore disappointment. The chief magistrate of Edinburgh, who had taken his dinner as plain Mr. William Arbuthnot, took his drink as Sir William Arbuthnot, Knight Baronet of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland,—the knighthood, as was alleged, having been, for the want of a sword, inflicted by that much more appropriate weapon, a large carving knife, and the baronetage having subsequently issued from the patent office in the usual form, and for the usual fee. All this having been done, the King retired, and the corporation-men kept up the feast, though not so long or so heartily but that all the rest finally went to their homes *more sober than a judge*.

After the King had witnessed the devotedness of

the Athenian authorities at the table, it was proper that he should see the devotion of the people in the church; and here again was one of those scenes which struck me, and must have struck him, very forcibly, as to the difference of a free people, and fawning courtiers, corporation fools, and party slaves.

Becoming preparations having been made, and the King having been furnished with a perspective sketch of the church, and a written programme of the service, it was agreed that the Very Reverend David Lamont, D.D., Moderator and Spiritual Head upon Earth of the Kirk of Scotland, should preach before him, in the name and stead of all his willing and worshipping brethren, while the "men," the "leaders," and the people, should demean themselves with that decorum, which the day, the service, and the occasion required.

When the services of the Scottish kirk are performed in a becoming manner, there is a feeling, a sublimity, and a heavenliness about them, of which one who considers only their simple and unadorned structure could form no adequate idea; and when I observed the still and unbroken solemnity of the service, and the effect which it obviously had, not only upon those who are accustomed to it, but upon those strangers who, in whatever predilection they had for one religion

more than another, were wedded to the more artificial and gaudy ritual of another church—a church which had been at enmity with the Scottish kirk from the beginning, and which, in dislike to the system of sober equality among the Scottish clergy, and the democratic nature of their church establishment, have attempted to hold up their form of worship as cold, meagre, incapable of stirring up devotion in the hearts of men, and, by consequence, not so gratifying to the Almighty as the more costly and complicated ceremonial of others,—I could not help believing that, of all forms of religion, the simplest is decidedly the best, and that if the object of the propagators of Christianity was nothing but the cultivation of the minds and the improvement of the morals of society, they would carefully avoid all artifice and all show. Those, indeed who have considered the correspondence that exists between the forms of religious worship, and the intellectual culture of the great body of the people, cannot have failed to observe, that pompous shows and gaudy ceremonies have ever been the concomitants of general ignorance and superstition, and that a plain and unadorned system of worship has uniformly been characteristic of an intelligent people.

Scotland is an eminent example of this; and whoever takes the trouble to investigate the struc-

ture of Scottish society will, to a certainty, find that for half their virtues, and more than half their information, they are indebted to the presbyterian kirk. Nor is it by any means difficult to find out the reason: A religion of shows and of sounds,—of mummeries and of music,—must ever be a religion of the senses. How gaudy soever the trappings, and how fine soever the music, they can afford nothing more than a gratification of the senses at the time. Forms cannot exist vividly but in matter, and when the string of an instrument ceases to vibrate on the ear, the pleasure which it affords, however sweet or however delightful, is at an end: they enter not into reflection; they stimulate not the more rational and permanent faculties of the mind; and, though they may be made to influence, and influence powerfully, the passions, while they last, they leave no lesson which can be useful as a general rule of life. Hence, though the churches of Scotland be, compared with those of England, rude in the extreme; though the sacred music of Scotland be often the untutored attempt of nature, without the aid of flutes, hautboys, and violins, as in the poorer churches of England, or the solemn notes of the organ, as in the richer ones; and though the prayers of the Scottish preacher are generally couched in terms less stately and sublime than those of the service-book of the English

church, yet we have the clearest proof that can be given of the superior efficacy of the Scottish mode of worship, in the superior veneration which the people of Scotland, without any hope or even possibility of earthly reward from it, pay to the rites and ordinances of religion, and especially to that most beneficial of all religious institutions, the setting apart of the sabbath as a day of calm tranquillity and holy meditation.

I know not whether the Author of these pages, or the Sovereign of these realms, was the more delighted with the calm, sustained, and religious air of the people of the Athens and of Scotland, as they both proceeded from the palace of the Holyrood to the High Kirk, on the morning of Sunday, the 25th of August. A countless multitude thronged the street, and filled the windows and house-tops; they were habited in the neatest and cleanest manner; and their profound silence formed a wonderful contrast to the noise of their mirth upon the former occasions. There was not a cheer, a shout, or even a whisper; but, as the King passed along, the men lifted their hats, and the whole passed with the most sustained but respectful reverence. They appeared to respect their King, but to respect him less than they did the institutions of their God, and the simple sublimity of that religion which their own perseverance, faith, and

courage, had gained them, in spite of the efforts of courtiers and kings, by whom its integrity, and even its existence, were menaced.

The extreme decorum of the people upon this day was the more creditable, that it had been arranged by none of the authorities; and those who formed the mass of the spectators were chiefly such as, on account of their distances or their pursuits, could not obtain a sight of their monarch upon any other day.

In the crowd I could distinguish a number, who, from their substantial blue garments, their broad bonnets, their lank uncut hair, their great staves, and their shoes dirty, as from a long journey, seemed to be true whigs of the covenant, who looked upon the descendant of Brunswick as a chosen one of Heaven's appointment, whose ancestors had been the means of preventing that civil and religious slavery which had threatened them in 1715 and 1745.

As seemed to be the case with all parts of the ceremony which were left to the awkward and inexperienced official men of the Athens, the King's accommodation, or at least his attendance in church was by no means what it ought to have been. He had brought a hundred pounds to give to the poor, and he had some difficulty in getting it disposed of; and, delighted with the unassisted vocal music,

which was really very good, he wished to join in the psalm, but he was unacquainted with the book, and there was nobody to point out the place for him. Still, judging from appearance as well as from all that I could hear afterwards, the King was better pleased with the stillness and solemnity of the Sunday than he had been with the shows of the other days. One reason of this no doubt was, that, on the Sunday, the King was not so belumbered by the aspiring loyalists thrusting themselves not only between him and the people, but between him and his own ease, comfort, and pleasure, as they had done in all those acts of the drama, of which themselves formed a leading or conspicuous part; and, as he had formerly expressed his high approbation of the appearance, and, which sounded more strange in the ears of a southern visitor, of the cleanliness of the Scottish people, he had an equal opportunity of complimenting them upon their decorum.

After the King had paraded, and dined, and heard sermon, there remained no further lion of Athens to afflict him but the theatre; which was arranged for his reception, as well as an Athenian theatre could be expected to be arranged for such a purpose, on the evening of Friday, the 27th of August.

The people of the Athens never have been able,

and probably never will be able, to support a respectable theatrical establishment. The genius of the Scottish people generally is not theatrical. There are still many sects of religionists among them by whom the stage is denounced as a "tabernacle of Satan." This is by no means confined to the provinces, or to the more austere or fanatical classes of dissenters; for, at the time when "I and the king" visited the Athens, her celebrated, and most deservedly-celebrated preacher, of the presbyterian establishment, was denouncing the sinfulness of stage-plays, both from the pulpit and the press; and though some of the courtly persons whom fashion had induced to become churchwardens or elders of his congregation, threatened to rebuke or leave him, because, in the true spirit of John Knox, he had preached a homily on kingly duties, in which there was not much of flattery, while the King was in the Athens, yet they let him denounce the theatre as he pleased.

The more aspiring cast of the Athenians lay claim to very superlative taste in theatrical matters, as indeed they do in every thing; and hence, they pretend that they do not patronise the theatre, because they cannot find a company of players who come at all up to their standard of histrionic perfection; and they appeal for proof to the fact, that when any of the grand stars or comets of the

London boards come to them for a night or two, they throng the theatre with their persons, and threaten to break it down with their plaudits. All this, however, proves nothing, but that they are unable to support a theatre, and that the crowding to see a strange actor for a night or two arises not from taste but from curiosity. The fact is, that, though England has produced the very best dramatic poet that ever lived, and some of the best dramatic performers, yet that the drama, as a matter of sentiment and feeling, and, as it were, of constitutional necessity, does not tally with the spirit even of the English people; and, as the Scotch have all the business habits of the English, together with a much greater degree of starchedness of character, and incapability of purse, the theatre cannot possibly flourish among them.

The London theatres, excepting in the case of occasional and accidental runs upon a particular piece, or a particular actor, are uniformly miserable speculations to the proprietors; and it will be found, that even the poor support which the theatres in London get, is given them, not by the people of London so much as by the vast concourse of strangers who feel at a loss how to spend their evenings. Before the people, either of the Athens, or of any other part of the British dominions, can become theatrical, they must have a little more

relaxation from hard labour than they can at present command. The national debt, and the immense public establishments, are the real causes why there are not only no Shakspeares now, but why the heroes of the old Shakspeare have given place to the wooden or real horses of a more buffooning race. The people must not only work, but work hard, during the live-long day; and when they have an hour which they can snatch from the abridged civilities of social life, for the purpose of looking at a theatrical exhibition, they very naturally prefer that which costs them no labour of thought and which makes them laugh, to that which would impose upon them fatigue of the mind in addition to fatigue of the body. To say, therefore, that the Athens does not support the theatre, because she cannot find a *corps dramatique* that comes up to her taste, has no surer a foundation than any other of those airy structures which she builds as the monuments of her glory. None of the fine arts, as a matter of abstract study and speculation, and apart from its contributing to the general comforts of life, can ever prosper in such a state of society as that of England at the present day; and if they languish in the British metropolis, where there is the greatest abundance both of money and of idle people, what must they do among a people who are comparatively so poor and

so plodding as those of the Athens? If a London merchant, who goes to his place of business at one, and leaves it at three, does not encourage the drama, and the other fine arts, what can be expected from an Athenian special pleader, who drudges at Stair and Erskine, and thumbs Morison's Dictionary of Decisions, from grey dawn to dark midnight, except during the hours that he is occupied in gossiping in the large hall of the parliament-house, or wrangling in the little courts, and less niches? It is true, that Mr. Clark, now Lord Eldin, could adorn his brief with drawings, even in those places,—that the Unknown, who is only a copying machine in his official capacity, can spin a chapter, or correct a proof-sheet,—and that Jeffery has sometimes been caught writing an article for the Edinburgh Review, during the time that some long-winded proser was darkening the case on the other side; but still all this is done more as matter of business than of pleasure; and would, in almost all cases, be let alone, were it not for the fee that it produces.

Miserable, however, as is the support which the theatre of the Athens receives, and must continue to receive, the King was constrained to visit it; however, from the smallness of the house and the number of those who had legal admission, as immediately belonging to his retinue, or his household,

he could be for a long time gazed upon by the chosen, without any great admixture of the mere vulgar. The play was nothing; but there was something rather novel in the by-acting. The great chief of Glengarry, who has made himself conspicuous in many ways and upon many occasions, and who has proved his descent from Ronald, the elder of the two Vikingr, who came robbing and remained royal in the Hebudæ, being thus, not only "every inch a king," as well as George the Fourth, but a king of a much older and a more legitimate dynasty, stood up for the royal prerogative of wearing his bonnet, and keeping his seat, while the band was playing, and the audience shouting, "God save the King." For this he was complained of somewhat angrily, and, in my opinion, very unjustly; for, if they played and sung "God save the King," in honour of George Augustus Frederick Guelph, King of Great Britain and Hanover, then they stinted others of their due, and showed a partiality not to be borne, when they did not strike up "God save the Chief," in honour of Alexander Ronaldson Macdonell, of Glengarry and Clanronald, heir to the titles, the virtues, and the valour, of Donald of the Isles. This was omitted, however, and so after this dramatic scene, the Monarch of these realms staid not another hour in the Athens; but merely rested a

day in the neighbourhood, and then took his departure, in a manner as shall be set forth in another section.

THE NATIONAL MONUMENT.

" Si monumentum queriris, Circumspice."

Though the laying of the foundation-stone of the " National Monument of Scotland" is to be regarded as a mere interlude in the royal acting, and of course as a mere parenthesis in my outline of the same, yet it merits a few sentences, not only on account of the curiosity of the thing itself, but because it throws some light upon the vanity of Scottish official men in general, and upon those of the Athens in particular.

To some people, the idea of building a national monument for Scotland, or in other words, a monument for the Scottish nation, may seem a work not of supererogation merely, but of folly; because the Scottish nation, so far from running any risk of becoming extinct and being forgotten, is in a very lively and flourishing state; and there are no people that, wherever they may go, cherish so carefully, and proclaim so loudly, the praise of their country, as the Scotch. But this monument was intended to answer two very nice purposes,—the one for the glory of the loaf-and-fish politicians of Scotland, and the other for that of the Athens

So long as the country was in a state of distress, and it was doubtful whether the politics of the old or new system would ultimately triumph upon the Continent of Europe, a very large proportion of the leading men of Scotland, and of the Athens, joined the people in being Whigs. As such, they had no immediate share in the good things of the state; but they hoped that the wheel of hostilities would revolve, bring the party into office, and so feed them in proportion to the extent of their fasting and longing. Independently of their intrinsic value, Whig politics are a much better theme for declamation than Tory. In that faith, one can talk long and largely about the majesty and rights of the people, and when not in office, one can promise as largely as one pleases; while the most judicious plan for the Tory is to pocket his reward, and thank God; or if he boasts any thing, it must be only to the choice few, and when the inspiration of a dinner looses his tongue. Under all those circumstances, the Tories of the Athens, though they had all the substantial things their own way, were confined to the actual enjoyers of office and emolument; and the tongues and pens of their opponents were so hard upon them, that they had begun to be afraid to hold even their wonted meetings. Thus it became necessary that they should do something which should either win the hearts or dazzle the

eyes of their countrymen. The former was without the compass of their speculations; so they set about the latter; and after floundering a long time from one scheme to another, they at last hit upon this wise one of the monument.

After the requisite number of ladies and gentlemen had licked the scheme into some sort of shape in private, they held a meeting in the Assembly-Rooms in George Street, on the 24th of September, 1819, at which his Grace of Athol presided; and divers other persons, equally loyal, and almost equally tasteful and wise, gave their assistance. The time was well-chosen. It was in the very depth of those political clouds which, arising immediately from the sufferings of the people, and remotely, as was supposed, from the wasteful expenditure and unaccomodating pride of the Administration, were threatening to burst upon both ends of the island. The object, as set forth in the resolutions of that meeeting, was threefold:—First, the erection of a monument to commemorate the great naval and military achievements of the British arms, during the late glorious and eventful war; secondly, in order to testify the gratitude of the projectors to the Almighty, they were to connect a church with the monument of the achievements, and endow two ministers to officiate therein; and thirdly, they were to set apart a certain number

of the seats in this church for the benefit of pious strangers visiting the Athens. All which being settled, they set about a subscription for raising the funds. In those days, however, they were by no means such adepts in political arithmetic as they have since become, through the labours of Joseph Hume and others; and though they had their purses, they were neither so full nor so easily opened as their loyal intentions. As that moment, the monument to the achievements, the church, and the two ministers, would have cost them more than a hundred thousand pounds; and thus the monument, besides its more avowed and desired objects, would have been the monument of all the disposeable cash of the whole Tories of the Scotland,—a sepulture and a remembrance of which, they were not altogether so fond. Wherefore, finding that the subscriptions amongst themselves were in danger of becoming the monument of the project, they applied to the General Assembly of the Scottish Kirk. That venerable constellation of churchmen, after grave deliberation, declared that the thing was "a most suitable and appropriate expression of gratitude to the Lord of Hosts," and forthwith recommended a general address from the one thousand and one parish pulpits of the Kirk, for the purpose of obtaining collections and subscriptions from the one thousand and one parishes.

But the parsons were not over-hearty in the cause, and the people were less so; and thus the whole sum produced did not much exceed a hundred pounds—about two shillings for the prayers and pleading of each minister.

Having thus learnt from experience, that the scheme would not do, either as a party and political measure among themselves, or as a clerico-politico-religious one in the hands of the ministers of the kirk, they took up new ground altogether, and addressed themselves to a much more active and promising principle, the vanity of the Athens. They began with a long and learned parallel between the overthrow of Buonaparte and that of Darius and Xerxes; and then, coming gradually a little nearer home, they hinted, that, in his encouragement of the arts, Lord Melville was the express image of Pericles. This brought them to the marrow of the subject: Edinburgh was very much like Athens,—it was, in fact, the Modern Athens, or the Athens Restored; the Calton Hill was a far finer thing than the Acropolis; the freestone of Craigleith excelled in beauty and durability the marble of Pentelicus; the Frith of Forth outstretched and outshone the Egean or the Hellespont; the kingdom of Fife beat beyond all comparison Ionia and the Troad; Ida and Athos were mere mole-hills compared with North Berwick Law

and the Lomonds; Platæa and Marathon had nothing in them at all comparable with Pinkie and Preston Pans; Sir George Mackenzie of Coull, excelled both Æschylus and Aristophanes; Macvey Napier was an Aristotle; Lord Hermand a Diogenes; Macqueen of Braxfield had been a Draco; the Lord President was a Solon; a Demosthenes could be found any where; and Lord Macconachie was even more than a Plato. Then, to make the parallel perfect, and indeed to make the Modern Athens every way outstrip the Athens of old, only one thing was wanting, and that was, that there should be erected upon the top of the Calton-Hill, a copy of the Temple of Minerva Parthenon, to be called the national monument of Scotland, as that had been called the national monument of Greece; and that the independence of the modern city and the modern land should survive the building of the monument as long as that of the old had done.

The proposal took amazingly; for, in an instant, every quill was up to the feather in ink, every tongue was eloquent, and every lady and gentleman took an Athenian *nom de guerre*— Alcibiades there, Aspasia here, till they had Athenized the whole city. Still, however, fine as the situation was, and fond as they were of it, a Parthenon in speech was a cheaper thing than a Parthenon in stone; and so, though Edinburgh

had, beyond all doubt or dispute, become the Modern Athens, it still wanted the temple of Minerva upon the Calton-Hill as the national monument of Scotland.

It was still wished and resolved, however, that this finishing touch should be given to the likeness and the glory of the Modern Athens; and, as the tories, the ministers, and the dilettanti, had all failed in the accomplishment of the thing, it was resolved to call in royal aid, and have the assistance of his majesty at laying the basis of this mighty monument. But even here, there were obstacles in the way of this slow-going Parthenon: it would be too much to ask the King to lay the foundation-stone in person; and yet, if he were present, the laying of it would be a humiliation of the whole tories of the country in the sight of majesty; for it happened unfortunately for them, that the grand master of the mystic craft in Scotland was none other than the Whig Duke of Hamilton: But wisdom has many ways of going to work; and so they resolved that the tory lords should act the King by deputation, and command the grand master to do the work. This was no sooner thought of than put in execution. An immense number of the craft formed a procession, and the stone was laid, leaving the structure to be built when time and funds should permit.

THE DISPERSION

"To your tents, O Israel."

Never was the philosophic adage of "soonest hot, soonest cold," more completely verified, than in the case of the loyal official men of Scotland. At every point, and in every thing, they had been eclipsed; in most things they had felt a fancied neglect and disappointment; and never did Welsh squire or Highland chief, when jostled by the London crowd in Cheapside or the Strand, sigh more for his white villa or gray fortalice, than they did for a return to the snug honours of their respective burghs. There was wormwood in the cup which they durst not throw away, and which they were unwilling to drink,—there were from each burgh, men whom they had formerly attempted to look down upon, in consequence of an assumed or presumed influence at court; and those men had seen with what indifference themselves and their very best addresses had been treated; and they would not fail to communicate this to the people at home. Where they had hoped to shine, they had only smoked; where they had made sure of rising, they had sunk; where they had counted upon honours and rewards, they had only incurred expense which their constituents would compel them to pay out of their own pockets; and where

they had sown hopes the most sweet, they could reap nothing but disappointment the most bitter. It was piteous to see their looks,—blank and dull enough when they first came in the flush of their importance; but now doubly blank, and trebly dull.

"*Et tu Brute!*" The very magistrates of Edinburgh,—that provost Arbuthnot, the moment that he knew his own was to be the only "*gentry*" conferred upon a Scottish magistrate, cut his country cousins. Not even Glasgow herself, notwithstanding her lodgings hired at a thousand guineas a week, could be permitted to taste so much as a glass of cold water in the presence of the King. Perth "tried herself o' the Gaelic," and swore all the oaths of the mountains; the little, side-fidgetting, owl-faced provost of Inverness, who had come "over the hills and far away" in a dog-cart, in order that he might avoid the contamination of his bailies, poked out his under-lip like the edge of a singed pan-cake, and with his right hand gave a most fierce and ominous scratching to his left elbow. Aberdeen blasted the eyes of his own cats, and vowed that he would "vote for Josaph Heem, oat o' pyure retrebeeshon."

Never, indeed, was bold beginning brought to so lame and impotent a conclusion; but it was a conclusion which any person, except a Scotch burgh

magistrate, might have anticipated. Even the Lord-Mayor of London is a commoner at Hampstead or Brixton, and what, then, could an Inverness or a Perth Bailie, or even a Glasgow Provost, be in the modern Athens, and while the whole of the official men there were bowing before the King, in the hope of securing all the advantage to themselves? If neglect be the portion of the man who can afford to place upon the table at his election-dinner as much turtle as would float a seventy-four, and who sends over the world,

> ———"Argosies with portly sail,
> Like signiors and rich burghers of the flood,"

what could be expected of the man who retailed pig-tail tobacco by the yard, or played the leech to the breechless urchins of the mountains? "Nothing," will be the answer of any uninterested spectator or hearer; but to put any corporation man, more especially if he be Scotch, in possession of this part of his utter insignificance without his own burgh, or indeed, to any rational purpose, within it, would be as hard and hopeless a task as ever was undertaken by man.

Thus the chances are, that though these poor innocents (and to have beheld their rueful looks on their neglect and disappointment, would have created bowels in a Turk, or made Burdett pity, if not love, borough-mongers,) felt all the bitterness

of the infliction, they would profit nothing by the wholesome hint of the lesson,—just as in a school, the blockheads get all the whipping, and none of the Latin.

Even as early as the levee day, those persons had found that they were not in their proper element, and the discovery had become more plain and palpable every day. Their first and fondest hopes were that each would be made a peer; then they came down to baronets; next to simple knights; and again each would have been pleased if the King had given him a snuff-box,—or even, latterly, a pinch of snuff. But all that the King gave was an Irish giving—he gave himself no trouble about them; and the whole court, or, as tails were the fashion, the whole royal tail, from the Right Honourable Robert Peel, Secretary of State for the Home Department, to Sir Patrick Walker, Knight, Usher (not, as some say, of the white feather,) but of the White Rod, followed at the hinder parts of its royal master. Even with regard to the counties, there were few of the men in office who met with much regard. A Scotch lord-lieutenant has commonly a very capacious swallow himself; thus whatever the minor officers happen to pick up is only at second hand through him; and upon the occasion alluded to, a few wary wights who gave themselves airs haughty and

tyrannic enough, while in their own localities, might be seen twittering after the great man who made them, just as Irish beggars twitter after a mail-coach. But hope is like the sun, it ever rises the soonest, and sets the latest, upon the most elevated point; and so, ere the last and lingering ray had gone down upon the pinnacle of royalty, the middle men of Scotland and of the Athens were dark as Erebus. Long before that feast of which they were forbidden to eat, and that solitary honour to Provost Arbuthnot which they were forbidden to witness, the greater part of the "bodies" had taken their knapsacks and their departure.

For a day or two previous, they who one little week before had looked down not only upon great merchants and little squires, but absolutely upon the nobles of the land, might be found at the corners and crossings of streets, begging a bow from the poorest of their townsmen.

On the morning preceding the pilgrimage, I took an early walk round the Calton-Hill; and I cannot say that I ever met with a spectacle more ludicrously pathetic than the chief magistrate of a royal burgh, who sat in brown and stony meditation there. A large stone formed his seat; and, but for his resemblance to human nature, and the chain of office that was about his neck, I might have supposed that the seat and the sitter were of the

same senseless material. The north-east wind swept coldly upon him, but he appeared to heed it not; as little did he notice me, as I went close up to scan his singular appearance. In shape, in size, and in colour, his face more resembled a brick than any other similitude that I could find. One hand hung upon his knee and held a snuff-box, by the inscription upon which I could perceive that he had been a colonel of volunteers; while the other hand, arrested in middle course, as it bore its load from the silver to the brazen repository, was relaxed in its hold, and dropping upon the cravat that with which he meant to powder the intellect. His speculationless eye was directed across the blue Firth, and to the brown mountains, among which I should presume he had his residence; and, heedless of any passer by, he was taking up his Ecclesiastes like another Solomon: "Deil's i' that King! could not he hae staid at hame, and let us continue to tell him a' abaut the countrie? We hae put ourselves to nae sma' fash an' expense, and it has a' come to a bonnie upshot. Our business negleckit, half the siller cuinzied out a' our ain pooches, naething but lookit doon upon here; an' a' for the sake o' bein' taunted and worried by the folk at hame, for sax months at the least." Thus saying, he bounced up, buttoned his coat, trotted away to the coach-office, and, instead of returning at the tails of four

grays as he had come, was fain to ride outside the stage-coach, and smuggle himself into his burgh under cloud of night.

The rout soon became general: Glasgow, in great wrath, took her coach, and her lamentation, and drove so furiously, that the cries of "make way for the duke," and "stop thief!" resounded alternately at the hamlets and turnpike-gates; while the echo of the western city, emptied as it still was of a great part of its inhabitants, was the most dismal that can be imagined. Aberdeen tarried not the wheels of her chariot, until she had reached her own Castle Street; where the answer that she made to the many inquiries as to what she had gotton was, "It wad nae mak ony body vera fat." Nor was disappointment the only misery against which they had to bear up. Perth got her head broken by thrusting herself in the way at the peer's ball. Poor Dundee got her pocket picked at some place she did not mention. Inverness was put on quarantine when she went home. Invervie found that during her absence, a radical barber and breeches-maker had established himself next door, and monopolized the whole custom; and, in short, every one had a tale of woe, which, while it pleaded for pity, found only derision.

Towards the close of the exhibition, a number even of the people seemed to get heartily tired of

the business; and notwithstanding all the scramble that was made by those whose interest it was to preserve appearances as much as possible, every succeeding act fell off in interest, and, had George the Fourth remained in the Athens for but one brief month, it is probable that the people of Scotland would have returned to their own homes, and the Athenians to the worship of their own idols.

THE PARTING.

"Adieu, Adieu, Adieu! remember me."—SHAKSPEARE.

The streets of the Athens, which had been thinning of people ever since the King's arrival, were, on the morning of Friday the 30th of August, the day on which he was to take his departure, as still and silent as though the chariot-wheel of majesty had never been heard in them. The constables, lacqueys, and laced porters at the gates of the Holyrood had dwindled to a small and feeble remnant; no merry archer, in broad bonnet of blue, and doublet of green tartan, demanded the pass-word, with bent bow and pheon ready for the string; the foot of the casual house-maid wakened the old and melancholy echo in its deserted halls; and those apartments which were so recently gladdened by the gorgeous train of the King, and made lovely and gay by the presence of all that

Scotland could boast of the fair and the noble, were in sure progress to being as usual "furr'd round with mouldy damp and ropy slime," over which the faint recollection (for even then it was waxing faint,) that the King had been there, "let fall a supernumerary horror," which, to those who during the King's stay had been raised to office, and put on the guise of courtiers, only served to make the night of his absence "more irksome." The cannon, which for the previous fourteen days, had ever and anon been pealing royal salutes, began to be dragged from the heights of Salisbury Crags and the Calton-Hill; and the royal standard was taken down, leaving the bear widowed staff bleaching in the air. The guns of the venerable castle too, had subsided into the common office of chronicling the several holidays and anniversaries, as though they had been a mere kalendar; the last booths and benches were in the act of being pulled down; and, excepting in shopkeepers' books, in the blackening of a few houses in the illumination, and in the baronet's patent of Sir William Arbuthnot, and the knighthood of Raeburn, a painter, and Fergusson, deputy-king of the Athenian beef-eaters, the Athens retained no external trace of the royal visit, even when the royal cavalcade was barely escaping from the suburbs.

The people were intoxicated with its coming, and

seemed for a time to have dreamed; but the dream had melted away, and the interest seemed to be measured exactly by the time that the King had to remain. Every day it waxed less and less, till, on the day of his departure, it had vanished altogether. I say this, of course, of the people generally,—of those who, in their minds and their circumstances, are independent, and not of them who basked in the sunshine of the court, or had realities or hopes from the royal munificence. These, of course, followed after the King to the last, and conveyed him to his barge, but the people stood by with the most provoking indifference, and, to the broadest hints that they should shout, returned only a few scattered murmurs of approbation. They turned to each other, and talked of the passing splendour as if it had been a common spectacle. At the same time, the King himself, and not the mere pomp, was certainly the object of their attention and solicitude. "Hech," said the old bonneted sire to his neighbour, as the King passed them rapidly on the beautiful lawn at Hopetoun House, "Hech! an' so that's the real descendant o' Brunswick, wha preserved us the Declaration of Rights, and the Protestant Succession, whilk allow ilka man, gentle and simple, to hae the keepin' o' his ain body, and, what's muckle better, o' his ain saul and conscience. God bless him, an' keep him frae evil counsellors,

and sinfu' neebours, for they say that the gryte fouk about Lunnon are no' just what they should be." Thus did the rustics hold converse with one another; and it could not be expected that persons who had their minds in tone for such remarks, could bawl and shout like the unreflecting rabble, whose tongues, were it King George or King Crispin, would be equally loud.

That the loyalty of official men, of all conditions, in Scotland, is as fawning and obsequious, as in any country under the sun, I could not fail to observe: as little could I fail to observe, that that of the people of Scotland is of a very different character, and not to be judged of by their shouting or not shouting at a royal pageant. With them, loyalty is, like every thing else, a matter of reason and reflection, and not of mere impulse and passion; and they never lose sight of the original and necessary connexion between the King and the people. They do not look upon the King as one who is elevated above man and mortal law, and who holds a character directly from Heaven, in virtue of which, he can, at his pleasure, and without being accountable, put his foot upon the neck of millions of the human race. They consider him as originally set up by common consent, and for the common good, and they admit of the law of lineage and succession just because it saves the

chance of civil war, and gives a centre and a rallying point to the strength and energy of the country. The melancholy, which the now deserted state of the Athens, contrasted with its recent bustle and activity, was calculated to produce, was increased by the day of the King's departure being one of the most gloomy and comfortless that it is possible to imagine. The wind alternately swept in hurricanes which drove immense masses of clouds over the city, and died away in dead calms which allowed those clouds to retain their positions and pour out their contents in torrents. Early as was the season, the leaves from the few trees in the vicinity of the Athens had begun to fall; and, as the wind freshened, they coursed each other along the dirty and deserted streets in ironical mimickry of those processions by which they had so lately been filled. It was no day either for examining the still life of the Athens, or for studying the manners of the Athenians; and so, as my chief purpose had been delayed by every display during the King's visit, I thought it just as well to see the end,—to mark the difference of feeling and expression that the people would have at the time of a King's coming and at that of his going. Accordingly, I set out for Hopetoun House, where royalty was to be refreshed, ere he again attempted the waters.

It had been expected, that the King would grace

with his royal presence, Dalmeny Castle, the beautiful seat of Lord Roseberry, but he contended himself with a drive through the grounds. Nor was the day such as to permit him to see the prospect in descending Roseberry Hill to Queensferry. The view there is peculiarly fine, and to Scotchmen it must be highly interesting. Immediately below is the Forth, spotted with islands and covered with shipping. To the left are the rich woods and extensive demesnes of Hopetown, with the ancient burgh of Queensferry at their entrance. To the right, are the bolder shores of Fife, over which rises the beautiful ridge of Ochills. The towers of Stirling, long the seat of kings, rise in the centre; and at no great distance is the field of Bannockburn; and to the right, amid the gray pinnacles of Dunfermaline, sleep the ashes of the Bruce. Further off Benledi, Ben-an, and Benvoirlich raise their lofty crests, and the noble peak of Ben-lomond pierces the most distant cloud. Altogether it is a scene worthy of royal attention, and within its ample circuit are countless recollections not unworthy of kingly meditation. The place where Graeme's Dyke set bounds to the ambition of the Romans, till the Caledonians fell a prey to luxury and corruption, may tell that the strength of a people is not in walls and ramparts, but in courage, in virtue, and in freedom. The

stone near the banks of Carron, where the royal standard of Scotland first was displayed triumphant after years of suffering and humiliation, and the spot at which the battle-axe of Bruce cleft the helm and head of the invader's champion, tell what may be done by an independent people, under the conduct of a brave and virtuous prince; the veneration with which Scotchmen yet look towards the crumbling ruins of Dunfermline, proclaims that the patriotism of a King far outlives mere pomp and tinsel; and the fields of Falkirk and Sherriff-muir, might have whispered in the ear of George the Fourth, how hard Scotchmen had struggled in order that his family might wear the crown. It seemed, however, that Nature had refused his majesty a glance of the talismans of these recollections; and that, as he had confined his attentions (we mean his private attentions, which, of course, are exclusively at his own disposal,—in his public displays he was equally attentive to all,) to one family or party, so the glories of Scotland were shrouded from his view. During the whole day, a thick cloud lowered over the western horizon, through which only the nearest summit of the Ochills was but dimly seen, When his majesty came to Queensferry, it seemed as if "Birnam Wood had come to Dunsinane," for the whole fronts of the houses, with their appendages, were

covered with boughs; boughs too were hung across the street, and showed like triumphal arches turned topsyturvy, as in sorrow at the departure of the King. A small platform was erected at Port Edgar, a place a little to the west of Queensferry, about which there is some idle tradition of an ideal kingly visit, and deliverance from shipwreck. Thence to Hopetoun House, a distance of about two miles, a road was now made along the margin of the Forth. In the halls of the gallant Earl, a *déjeuné à la fourchette* was prepared for the King, a select few of the nobility, and many of the neighbouring gentry. The country people had assembled on the lawn, to the amount of some thousands, and were regaled with two or three butts of October.

The King arrived at the place of embarkation about three o'clock, walked to the platform, leaning on Lord Hopetoun's arm, and was received on the platform by the venerable chief commissioner, Adam, as convener of the Queensferry trustees. He took his old friend cordially by both hands and was by him conveyed to the royal barge, which he entered, and reached the yacht in about six minutes. Although the King's "last speech" had been hawked through the streets of the Athens in the morning, there is no evidence that he made one; and, indeed, gradually to its close, the whole

matter had melted away, like a dream from the recollection of the half-awakened. Scarcely, too, had his majesty got on board the yacht, when the dark clouds veiled his whole squadron like a curtain, and the incessant pelting of the rain scattered the remnant of the people.

It was with some difficulty, and at a late hour, that I was able to return to the Athens; and when I arose on the following morning, and sallied out to begin my survey, the contrast was too strong for my feelings. The whole line of George Street was unbroken, except by the hoary form of a beggar crawling along in front of those assembly-rooms which had lately been so gay; and the trim and active figure of the editor of the Edinburgh Review, who, with a great bundle of law-papers under one arm, and a new book under the other, shot along with as much rapidity, as though the most strong and skilful of the archer-band had discharged him from his bow. Queen Street was desolate; and in King Street, the only thing that I could notice was one or two of the personages who had lately flaunted their tails as highland chiefs, taking leave of their law-agents, with downcast and sorrowful looks. The regalia of Scotland were again consigned to their dull and greasy apartment in the castle; the High Street, which so recently had rung with the acclamations of serried

multitudes, now echoed to the grating croak of the itinerant crockery-merchant, and the ear-piercing screams of the Newhaven fish-wife. The gew-gaws, which for the last two weeks had glittered in the windows of the shopkeepers, had again given place to sober bombazines and webs of duffle; and the shopkeepers themselves were either leaning against the posts of their doors, and yawning to an extent which would have thrown any but Athenian jaws off the hinges, or sitting perked upon three-footed stools within, casting looks, in which hope formed no substantial ingredient, upon the long pages which their country friends had enabled them to write in their day-books; and of which, to judge from appearances, it was pretty plain that the term of payment would oe to the full as long as the amount. Every where, in short, that I came, there was an air of desolation; not by any means that the Athens was mourning for the departure of the King, for among the few persons who were visible, his name was not so much as mentioned, but in her own appearance she was mournful indeed, and though she retained the same form as during the display and rejoicing, her spirit seemed to be clean gone; and it was quite evident that, in order to catch the average and peculiar likeness of this boasted city, I must tarry till the present appearance had passed off, or

remove to a distance, till the natural one should return.

I preferred the latter alternative, and resolved, after resting for that day, to forget both the glory and the gloom in a month or two among the Scottish mountains; and then return to the Athens, when the return of business, of people, and of prate, should have been brought back to their ordinary channels.

CHAPTER IV.

THE ATHENS AND THE ATHENIANS IN GENERAL.

"A city set on an hill, which cannot be hid."

In point of diversity of situation and beauty, and durability of building materials, few cities have the same advantages as the Athens; and I know of no city, of which the general and distant effect, upon what side soever one approaches it, is more picturesque and striking. But, as is the case with most things that look well as wholes, one is miserably disappointed when one comes to examine the details. The ground upon which the Athens is built bears some resemblance to a fort with a ditch and glacis. The Castle and High Street, with the clustered buildings on each side, compose the fort; the Cow-gate on the south, the Grass Market on the west, and the North Loch on the north, form the ditch, which bears some resemblance to a noose thrown round the Castle, and having the ends stretching away eastward by the Holyrood;

and beyond this ditch the glacis slopes toward St. Leonard's, the Loch of Duddingstone, and the Meadows on the south, and toward the water of Leith on the north. The central division, although its situation be very airy, and also very favourable for cleanliness, has nothing to boast of in either of these respects. The houses are so closely huddled together, that, excepting the High Street itself, which is rather spacious, the inhabitants may almost shake hands from the windows of the opposite houses; and they are built to such a height, that scarcely a glimpse of sunshine can find its way within two stories of the foundations. In all this part of the Athens, there seems to be the greatest dislike to subways and common sewers; and thus, unless when the High Street is washed by a torrent of rain, it is by no means the most pleasant to perambulate. The southern ditch, or Cow-gate, is, throughout its whole extent, as filthy and squalid as can well be imagined; and, with the exception of a few public buldings, and one or two little squares, there is not much to he commended on the glacis byond. Indeed the whole, southward of the North Loch, which the Athenians style the sublime part of their city, is more remarkable for the sublimation of mephitic effluvia than of any other thing. The new town again, or the portion between the North Loch and the water of Leith,

is as dull as the other is dirty. The principal streets consist of long lines of stone building, without any break or ornament except wicket-doors and trap-hole windows, which render the whole very heavy, and induce one to believe that they are constructed with the intention of being as inaccessible and dark as possible. Princes Street, which is a single row, looking across the tasteless and unadorned gulf of the North Loch toward the beetling and shapeless masses of the old town, had originally been intended for private dwelling-houses, at the rate of a whole family per floor. Circumstances have changed, however. The Athenian fashionables (contrary to the natural tendency of the Scotch) have moved northwards; their places have been supplied by drapers from the Lawn Market, barbers from the Parliament Stairs, and booksellers from the Cross; and, as the immense weight of tall stone-houses renders the alteration of the ground-floor dangerous without taking down and rebuilding the whole, the expense of which would be very great, Princes Street is perhaps the most tasteless and clumsy line of shops in the island of Great Britain; while, so anxious are the people to huddle upon the top of each other, that it is not uncommon to find four or five shops for very opposite kinds of wares, in a pile up and down the same staircase. George

Street is the most gloomy and melancholy that can well be imagined; and a walk along its deserted pavements is sufficient to give any one the blue devils for a week. Queen Street is longer, but not a whit more lively; and, though the view from it be both extensive and varied, it seems no great favourite with the Athenians. Farther to the north the buildings are newer, and there is occasionally an attempt at the recurrence of architectural ornaments at the end of certain lengths of the buildings; but these ornaments want taste in their form, and force in their projections, and thus increase the poverty of the effect. Throughout the whole private dwellings of the Athens, you are impressed with the cold eternity of stone and lime, and you look in vain for that airy elegance, that rich variety of taste, and that repose of comfort, which you find in other places. Villas, self-contained houses, and snug or even decent gardens, seem to be held in the greatest abhorrence. You meet not with one of the delightful little boxes which are scattered round London by thousands, and of which there are always a few in the vicinity of even third-rate towns in England. The ambition of the Athenians appears to be, to make every four stone walls a joint stock company, as dull, as tasteless, and as heavy, as a stack of warehouses in Thames Street.

Of all the objects of Athenian detestation, the greatest, however, seem to be decently laid out pleasure-grounds, and trees. Strangers used to say that the rustic Scotch cut down all sorts of bushes, because ghosts and spirits whistled in them on windy nights; and really, when I looked at the many fine situations in and about the Athens, which the Athenians have taken particular care neither to improve nor to plant, I could not help thinking that this superstition, now banished from every province in Scotland, has taken up its abode in the Scottish metropolis. True, they have a public walk round the Calton-Hill, but that is merely a thing of yesterday; and though they have placed upon the top of it a monument to Lord Nelson, modelled exactly after a Dutch skipper's spy-glass, or a butter-churn; an astronomical observatory, tasteful enough in its design, but not much bigger than a decent rat-trap, or a twelfth-cake at the Mansion-House; and are to build "the National Monument;" yet they have never thought of planting so much as a thistle, but have left the summit of the hill in all its native bleakness, and allowed it to be so much infested by lazy blackguards and barefooted washerwomen, as to be unsafe for respectable females even at noon-day;—while after dusk this, the most fashionable promenade of the Athens, is habitually the scene of so

much and so wanton vice, that instead of an ornament to the city, as it might easily be made, it is a nuisance and a disgrace.

The royal precinct of the Holyrood, which occupies a piece of rich level ground about the palace, and which stretches a considerable way up the romantic heights to the south, is, one would think, a chosen place for taste to display itself upon; and when there are taken into the account the boast of the Athenians that their Holyrood is the finest royal palace in Britain, and that other boast which is so habitual with them that there is no need of repeating it, one would imagine that among all their boasted improvements the royal precinct would not have been overlooked; but all that they appear to have done for it has been to make it as dirty and as desolate as ever they could. The whole filth of the old town (and that is no small commodity) is collected in cess-pools within a few yards of the palace; and lest that should not be grateful enough to the Athenian olfactories, a considerable portion of the adjoining ground is set apart for the collection of manure from all places. Upon the other parts of the royal domain, about half a dozen of scraggy and withered trees, and an old thorn-hedge, more than half of which was, when I viewed it, reposing in the lap of its neighbour ditch, are the only attempts at landscape-gardening; and the

grandchildren of those by whom they were planted must, by this time, be in their graves or their dotage.

Salisbury Crags, again, are a natural object which the people of a less classical city would not only adore, but adorn by every means in their power. The Athenians act differently; their rulers hew down the picturesque masses of basalt, sell them at so much a cart-load, for paving the streets and Mac-Adamizing the highways, and put the proceeds into that bottomless box called the "common gude." About midway up that bold front of these cliffs which looks towards the city, there is what may be termed an accidental public walk. It has been formed by the cutting away of the rock above for the purposes of gain, and the tumbling down of the smaller fragments which were not saleable. When the Athenian authorities were alarmed at the Radicals, and bestirred themselves in getting a general subscription for the relief of those whom the changes consequent upon the late war had thrown out of employment, a few labourers were set to work on the middle of this walk; but they had no plan and no superintendent, and the funds were exhausted before it could be made accessible at either end; while the whole face of the Crags, instead of being tufted with brushwood and festooned with creeping plants, as

might have been done at very little expense, is as naked as—the shame of those who let it remain in its present condition.

The meadows southward of the city, and the adjoining common called "Bruntsfield-links," are not in much better condition. At some period, indeed, a walk or two had been formed in the meadows, and some hedges and trees planted, but neither the one nor the other have been attended to; while the grass is in so marshy a state that the cows, to which it is almost exclusively assigned, can with difficulty make their way across it. The whole extent of the North Loch, too, was till very lately, and great part of it is still, a putrid and pestilent marsh, at once offensive to the eye, and injurious to the health; and indeed, throughout the whole compass of the Athens, there is scarcely a tree or any thing green, except grass in the melancholy streets towards the meadows, and moss upon the dank walls of several of the more low and squalid dwelling-houses.

Notwithstanding all this, there are few places that boast more of their improvements than the Athens; and not many in which the people have been made to pay more upon that score. But either there has been a total want of skill in the projectors, or a total want of economy in those who had the execution,—if indeed there has not

been both. I was told repeatedly, that every scheme and measure to which the Athenian authorities give the name of a public improvement, is uniformly a job for the benefit, not of the public, but of some party or individual; and really, comparing what is said to have been expended with what has actually been done, I can find no other theory that will sufficiently explain the facts. The bell-rope of the Tron-Kirk appears not to have been the only case in which a hundred pounds expense has been incurred for the purpose of saving a shilling.

Even in her public buildings, the Athens has little of which she can boast. All the places of worship belonging to the established Kirk are tasteless; and the most modern ones are the most so. St. Giles' Cathedral is a black, shapeless, and ruinous mass, stuck round with booths and police-officers; and when one has said, that the portion of it set apart for public worship as the High Kirk, has a handsome old roof spoiled by tasteless painting, and a square tower with an imperial crown, which looks well at a distance, and not absolutely ill when one is close to it,—one has about summed up the whole of its merits. Respecting most of the other Presbyterian churches, the less that is said the better; the Grey-Friars, situate south of the Castle, has an interest with the more devout

people of Scotland, from the tombs of the martyrs that are in the adjoining burial-ground; and St. George's Church, which terminates the street of the same name, westward, is perhaps the most expensive and unseemly abortion of modern architecture. Public monuments in the Athens there are none, except Nelson's (formerly mentioned) on the Calton-Hill, and Lord Melville's column in St. Andrew's Square; and it is not the fashion of the Athens to consider her burying-grounds as sacred, or to set up memorials for the illustrious dead. If her plan gives her as much trouble as this would do, it is trouble of a different kind: she keeps down, as much as she can, all those who are not either illustrious already, or have not something to confer, as long as they are alive; and when they are dead, she gives herself no more trouble about them.

Of her other public buildings, the College is the largest; but as the plan was far beyond her means, it stood a ruin for a very considerable period, and will ultimately be a piece of patchwork in consequence of a deviation from the original design. Still, however, if it could be seen, the entrance front is majestic; and the opposite square (especially the whole façade in which the Museum is, and the rooms for the Museum itself) is singularly chaste and beautiful. The Register-House is a neat

building, and seen to considerable advantage; but there is something trifling in the whole air of it.

That frost-work style of architecture, which out-Goths all the Goths that ever existed, has visited the Athens, in some of its most tawdry and fantastic specimens,—the chief of which are an episcopal chapel near the west end of Princes Street, and another near the east end of Queen Street, of which it would puzzle a conjuror to point out the most ridiculous.

Even the Castle has suffered the infliction of the modern Athenian taste, by the erection of two or three piles within its ramparts which have every appearance of being cotton manufactories. So much for the still life of the modern Athens.

To give a general idea of the Athenian people, is by no means so easy a matter. They take their character from a number of circumstances; and the circumstances cannot be properly explained without an allusion to the character, nor the character rightly appreciated without a reference to the circumstances. If one dwell upon the general subject, one is forced to assert without any means of proving; and if one take up a single particular, although the proof be perfect in as far as that is concerned, it is difficult to establish the connexion, and point out the effect, with regard to the whole. To examine society with a view to determine the

general spirit and character of those who compose it, is like examining an animal with a view to a knowledge of the nature and operation of the living principal. If we examine it while alive and in the performance of its functions, we see the results without being able to understand the machinery; and if we dissect and separate the different parts, we have the machinery without the results; nor does it appear that there are any means by which we can obtain a contemporaneous view of both.

Thus I found the character of the Athenians different from that of the inhabitants of any other city; and I also found many of the circumstances under which they are placed to be peculiar; but still I am not prepared to say, that the one set of peculiarities are altogether to be set down as causes and the other as effects. The Athens has, doubtless, stamped upon her people much of their character, and they have requited her by service of the same kind; so that any pretension to be profoundly philosophic in the matter would be as impossible as for my purpose it is unnecessary.

The leading characteristic of the Athenians, of all ranks, all degrees of understanding, all measures of taste, all shades of party, and both sexes, is to esteem their own idols in preference to the idols of every other people on the face of the earth. Their own situation is the finest that can possibly be

found; and their own mode of improving it is superior to any that could be suggested. Their men, taken on the average, excel all others in wisdom, and nothing can any way compare with the brilliance of their women. In their manners they are never vulgar; and in their tastes and judgments they do not make half the slips and blunders which are made by the rest of the world. The songs of their poets (when they happen to have any) are transcendent for sublimity and sweetness; and the theories of their philosophers (of which they are never without a reasonable portion) are ever the most agreeable to nature, and the most nicely put together. Upon the latter point they are somewhat amusing; for in no place whatever have philosophic theories been so often changed, as among the sages of the succession of schools which, shining from the Athens, have dazzled and illuminated mankind; and yet, while each of these theories has been the object of Athenian adoration, it, and none but it, has been the true one. In politics they have not, at least for a long time, been agreed in their doctrines, or unanimous in their worship; for in politics, interest has generally much more to do than principle; and, being by much the stronger of the two, and pulling opposite ways with different parties, it has produced among the Athenians, divisions which are as remarkable

as their union of self-adoration in most other things.

Whence, it may be asked, does this self-adoration arise? To which I would answer, in the true Athenian manner, by asking where the affections of a widowed and childless woman, who has no hope and no chance of being courted by another, are centred. The Athens is a widowed metropolis: she stands registered in the the pages of history as having been the seat of kings,—she has her walls of a palace, her name of a royal household, and her gewgaws of a crown and sceptre; but the satisfying, the fattening, the satiating,—or perhaps, as some would call it, the stultifying presence and influence of the monarch is not there; neither is there any viceroy, or other kingly vicegerent set high enough in its stead, to attract the attention, and invite or command the worship of the people. Thus, she is in herself not only the capital of Scotland, but all that Scotland has localized as an apology for a king; and therefore, besides assuming the consequence due to a royal seat, she puts on the airs of royalty itself, and worships her own shadow in the mirror of the passing time. She is the only city in the British islands which is so situated; and this alone would be sufficient to give her a peculiarity of character, and to make that peculiarity an inordinate pride.

Thus the Athens, taking her nominal and her real situation into the account, is both metropolitan and provincial: with regard to Scotland, she has the name, and assumes the pride, of being metropolitan in every thing; and in as far as concerns the administration of the laws as peculiar to Scotland, and in some degree, also, as concerning the internal discipline of the Scottish Kirk, she is really metropolitan; but in respect of Britain generally, she is nothing more than a provincial city, and the matters in which she is provincial have, to the full, as powerful an influence upon her rival character, as those in which she is, or flatters herself to be, metropolitan, have upon the character which she is anxious to assume. It is not, for instance, in the nature of things, that she can ever take the lead in matters of taste and fashion. Wherever the executive and legislative powers of the state are allocated, it is there that the gay and the rich will throng; and notwithstanding all the boasted elegance and taste of the Athens, no Scottish nobleman, or even squire, spends his winter there, if he can afford to spend it in London. Hence, the Athens is not only destitute of the source whence fashion flows, but she is also left without the means by which it could be supported: she is second-rate in her very nature, and also in those who form her leading society.

But it follows of necessary consequence, that a place which is second-rate in fashion and in wealth, must be second-rate also in every thing which fashion can encourage and wealth reward. A solitary student who prosecutes a science, or a solitary artist who practises an art, for its own sake, and with an inferior degree of regard to present honour and emolument, might perchance succeed better in the Athens than in the British metropolis. But, as British society is at present constituted, there are few who have the means, and apparently not many who have the desire, of proceeding in this way; and, therefore, the place which attracts the fashion and the wealth, will also attract the superior talent, in consequence of the superior means of rewarding which it possesses; and upon this principle, it would be just as vain for the Athens to hope to rival London in any of the liberal arts, or elegant amusements, as it would be for the Scotch lords of Session to rival the upper House of the British Parliament, the George Street Assembly Rooms to rival Almack's, or the speeches of the Scotch advocates to be read with as much attention as those of the leading orators in the House of Commons.

Of those classes of persons whose professions fix them in Scotland, the Athens, if she manages her patronage honestly and judiciously, may always command the best. The judges and pleaders in

her supreme court ought to be superior to the sheriffs and attornies in the Scottish counties; her clergymen, if those who have the appointment of them were to be guided solely by merit, ought to be the most learned and most eloquent that Scotland can produce; the professors in her university ought (under the same proviso) to be superior to those of Aberdeen and St. Andrew's, and perhaps also to those of Glasgow; and, even in other cases, she may produce one or two lights more brilliant than the average in the metropolis;—but, in all cases, where there is no necessary tie, real or imaginary, to bind a man northward of the Tweed, the Athens must be satisfied with making her selection after London has been supplied. Or if she deny the conclusion, she must also deny a principle upon which her people know as well how to act as the people of any place,—that whoever can afford to pay the best, will get the best and the readiest service.

For adopting this theory, the Athens must not accuse me, either of ignorance of her erudition, or of a wish to detract from her real merits. I know her more intimately than she may perhaps be aware; and if I were to judge her by the strict letter of my own experience, I should place her sundry degrees lower still; and tell the world of some of the bitterness which she foolishly squeezes into her own

dish, and some of the ludicrous positions into which she works herself, by attempting a grace and a dignity, which her nature and her education alike deny to her; but I have no desire to state any more than is sufficient to establish the truth; and if she can point out a theory either of this leading feature of her general character, or of any of the more detailed and particular ones, which will explain the phenomena better than mine, I shall be very willing to adopt it. Meanwhile, however, it is fitting that a city, which not only looks down in scorn upon the country to which she owes her daily bread, but which affects to sneer at those whom she must notwithstanding copy, and whom it is utterly impossible that she can ever equal, should be rebuked for her arrogance, and resisted, when she would claim that to which she neither has nor can have the smallest title.

CHAPTER V.

POLITICS OF THE ATHENS.

"As when the sea breaks o'er its bounds,
And overflows the level grounds,
Those banks and dams, that, like a screen,
Did keep it out, now keep it in;
So, when tyrannic usurpation
Invades the freedom of a nation,
The laws o' th' land, that were intended
To keep it out, are made defend it."—BUTLER.

ALTHOUGH the Athens be the point at which the whole politics of Scotland have their origin and their termination; and, although the parties there be more uniform and incessant in their hostility than in the remote parts of the country; yet, it is impossible to understand the composition, spirit, and conduct of those parties, without premising a few words on the general question.

Now, though England growls, and Ireland brawls and fights, neither of them is perhaps so degraded in its political system as Scotland. The great body of the Scottish people may indeed be

said to have no political rights at all; and the members that are sent to the House of Commons as the representatives of Scotland, may just as properly be considered the representatives of Bengal or Barbadoes, with which they have often fully as much connexion, and in the welfare of which they are fully as much interested. In the Scottish counties, the real proprietors of the soil are not necessarily the voters for members of parliament; and, in the royal burghs of Scotland, the great body of the freemen and burgesses, instead of possessing the parliamentary franchise, are almost necessarily in opposition to those who do possess it. Freeholds, in the Scottish counties, are held either by charters directly from the King, or by charter from subjects as their vassals. No part of the lands in Scotland being now in the hands of the crown, the extent of holdings by crown charter cannot be increased; and, as the rents of the crown vassals were valued a considerable time ago, an increase of rent, either from the improvement of the estate, or from any other cause, does not increase its political value. None but those who hold of the crown, and whose valued rents are of the stipulated amount, can vote for members of parliament; though, if the valued rental amount to any number of times the sum necessary for a qualification, the holder of the crown charter for that rental possesses as many

votes as the amount will bear. In theory, therefore, there is a difference between the value of Scotch property in land, and the representation of that property in parliament. The value of the land varies with the prosperity of the country, while the extent of the representation remains the same. This is an injustice; but it is by no means the only or the greatest one of which the Scottish landholder has to complain. The property in the crown charter, or superiority, as it is called, is different from the property in the land: the lands may be sold, and the votes retained by the seller; the votes may be sold, without selling the land; or the land may be sold to one purchaser, and the votes to another.

This system is productive of so many evils, that, in many instances, a Scotch county representation is substantially no representation at all. The local interests and improvements of the counties are apt to be neglected, the county interest is easily thrown into the scale of any party or faction,—more especially if that party or faction be subservient to the administration,—and, as the county member, when ministerial, has great influence over all the government offices and patronage connected with the county, the chances are, that these will be bestowed upon persons who are either ignorant of their duties, from a want of local knowledge, or disliked

by the independent proprietors upon party grounds. The old and decaying families, whose fallen fortunes oblige them to sell their lands, and whose pride as well as whose interest induces them to retain their superiorities, for the purpose of turning them to political account, are thus ranged in opposition to the more active and intelligent, who, by the exercise of their own talents, have acquired the means of purchasing land; and thus, independently of the old and theoretic distinctions of tories and whigs, there is perhaps more to create and render conspicuous the distinction between the liberal and the servile, in the Scotch counties, than in those either of England or of Ireland.

In the royal burghs of Scotland, the separation between those who really possess the property and are interested in the welfare of the burgh, and those who are in possession of the elective franchise, is still more glaring in its absurdity, and pernicious in its effects. During the minority of James III. of Scotland, in 1469, when that prince was only seventeen years old, and when the turbulent nobles were setting the laws at defiance, and, by bands of armed ruffians in the streets, compelling the freemen of the royal burghs to choose their creatures as magistrates,—a statute was enacted, which was deemed salutary at the time, but which has since reduced the political influence of the whole burgesses

of Scotland to a mere nonentity, and made the Scotch burgh representation one of the most convenient and efficient engines of corruption that ever was devised. That statute gave to the official men, seldom exceeding twenty in any burgh, and generally the mere creatures of some chief or leader, who frequently has no connexion with the burgh at all—the power of electing their successors in office,—that is, of placing the whole parliamentary franchise, the whole revenues of the burgh, every species of patronage that it can exercise, and every alteration and improvement that it would require, solely and irretrievably at the control and disposal of about twenty persons, and giving it to them and their assignees as a perpetual inheritance.

Now, although these twenty men should be the most intelligent that each burgh could afford, yet, as the people have no voice in the election of them, and no control over the acts of their management, however corrupt, pernicious, or ruinous, it is impossible that they can be regarded as any thing else than an useless and pernicious excrescence,—a local despotism, of the most hurtful and humiliating description, and a marketable commodity, always willing to hire themselves to whoever should bribe the highest. Circumstanced as they are, however, it is impossible that they can be the most intelligent men in their respective burghs. Being a minority,

and a very small and insignificant one, public opinion must always be against them; and this circumstance alone has a degrading and debasing tendency. The object of the leading men among them must naturally be to preserve their own superiority and influence; and therefore they must naturally procure the election of recruits whose wisdom shall not be dangerous to their own influence, and whose feelings of honour shall have no tendency to revolt at the iniquities of the system; and thus, while the system is in itself as corrupting as can well be imagined, it has a tendency to draw towards it those who are both disposed and qualified for being corrupted. The specimens of those burghal office-bearers which I had seen in the Athens during the King's visit, were to me a decided proof of the badness of the system under which they are appointed; and the derision in which they appeared to be held by the people, and the pleasure which their disappointments and rebuffs seemed to afford, told plainly enough the estimation in which they are held; and the Scotch are by much too prudent and cautious a people not to pitch their estimate, both of things and of persons, in a very nice proportion to their value.

Now, independently of its mischievous political effects, there is something in this system which is peculiarly injurious to the local police and improve-

ments of Scotland. If the way in which those local rulers are chosen gives general offence, and if their own qualifications be so confessedly inferior as to excite contempt, it is not possible that the regulations which they frame, even assuming that they could be good in themselves, could be carried into effect with that decision, and supported with that cordiality, on the part of the public, which a wholesome police requires; as little is it likely that such men, so appointed, could either plan judicious and liberal improvements, or carry them into execution. Opposed to the people in their very formation, the people must be presumed to oppose them in every part of their conduct where opposition is practicable, and so annoy them in the rest of it, as to make them confine themselves to that—to which indeed the whole spirit of the system is exceedingly prone—their own personal importance and aggrandizement.

But it is with reference to the general politics of Scotland as centering in the Athens, that this system of burghal election exerts its most pernicious and permanent influence; for whoever chooses to go to the expense, (and where very weighty purses are not run against each other that is by no means great,) can purchase the votes of Scotch provost, bailies, and counsellors, with as much ease and certainty as he could do the necks of as many

geese. No doubt there are temporary and local exceptions, just as there have been wise legislators, upright judges, and generous commanders, in the very worst systems of despotism; but those exceptions, from all that I could ever learn, have been so few in number, and so far between, both in space and in time, as not to diminish the truth of the general likeness.

If indeed any other proof, than a knowledge of the system, and a sight of the men, were wanted, to show how extremely convenient a tool those Scotch burghal magistrates are, in the hands of whatever party has the political influence in Scotland for the time, that proof would be found in the great pertinacity with which the official men of the Athens have fought for the preservation of the system, and the miserable sophistications to which they have been obliged to have recourse, in order so to disguise it, as that it might be at all palatable to the better informed or more liberal official men in England. Within the last thirty years, the burgesses of Scotland have made two strong and almost unanimous efforts to shake it off. They have shown how ruinous it is to themselves, how degrading to the magisterial office, and how ill in accordance with that freedom which England boasts. But the lords advocate and other keepers of—what shall I say?—Ay—their own places, have

worked about it and about it; and "darkened counsel by words without knowledge," till some unfortunate circumstance of the times has enabled them to couple the attempt at its destruction with that with which it has no connexion—sedition and rebellion against the British government. The one attempt was spoiled by the breaking out of the French Revolution, and the disturbances which at that time took place in Scotland; and the subsequent attempt failed in consequence of those grumblings of the people, which were occasioned by a time of scarcity of provisions and want of employment.

The state of the country representation, and the system of the burgh government, would be in themselves sufficient to lay the ministerial party in the Athens open to suspicion, and to fill the rest of the inhabitants with discontent. But these are heightened by other circumstances. The judges, and more especially the crown lawyers, have a power over the people of Scotland, at which Englishmen would stand aghast. The judges (no matter whether they exercise it or not) have, directly or indirectly, the power of nominating every one of the jury by which a Scotchman is tried,—or, if they have not this power in its full extent now, they had it till very lately. In the case of ordinary crimes, this power, though a theoretical imperfec-

tion, might not be very dangerous in practice,—because, in ordinary crimes, there is nothing to entice a judge away from the natural dictates and natural course of justice; but, in offences of a political description, the case must be different,—because all or at least a majority of the judges, being persons who, at some period of their lives, are helped forward by ministerial influence, cannot be supposed to be entirely divested of those feelings of gratitude which are natural to all classes and conditions of men.

The lord advocate of Scotland is, from the very nature of his office, much more a political character than any judge. In all questions between the King and his subjects, or between the people and the criminal law, he is not only the King's principal officer, but the express representative of the King himself; and, except in the truly kingly and glorious attribute of granting pardon, he has more ample powers than the King has by the law of England. It is true, that, through the instrumentality of his attorney-general, the King can file warrants against such of his English subjects as are guilty of offences, tending to injure his person, or subvert his government, and bring them to trial without the intervention of a grand jury; and it is also true, that this power has been exercised in cases where neither the person nor the government

of the King could have been in the smallest danger; but still, great as this power is in itself, and dangerous as the frequent exercise of it is to liberty, it is nothing in comparison of what the Scotch lord advocate possesses. The attorney-general is always understood to institute his proceedings in consequence of a representation from the sovereign himself, or from the great officers of the state; and, by law, it is strictly confined to what are called state offences. The lord advocate, on the other hand, is of his own pleasure, and without necessary consultation with any one, not only the public prosecutor in all cases of trial, but the arbiter who decides who shall or shall not be tried; and, in the latter capacity, he, of the plenitude of his own power, performs all the functions of an English grand jury. When a crime, either against society or against the state, has been committed, or when a person is suspected of the one or the other description of crime, the procurator fiscal of the district or burgh, (who, in many instances, is an ignorant and bungling attorney, whose friends, or whose secret services, have procured that office for him, as much on account of his incapacity for making a decent living by the ordinary practice of his profession, as for any other reason,) takes "a precognition," that is, a secret and inquisitorial examination of *ex-parte* evidence, which he transmits

to the lord advocate as the ground upon which that officer may or may not proceed, just as he pleases. If it please the lord advocate that the party thus accused shall be indicted, he prepares the necessary instruments; and the trial must be begun, if the party accused shall petition the court for it within forty days of his being imprisoned, and held to bail, and finished within other forty days; but in all cases which come before the lords of justiciary, either in their sessional court in the Athens, or at their periodical circuits in the different counties, the lord advocate is substantially both the public prosecutor and the grand jury, that sends the case to trial. Where a special commission of *oyer* and *terminer* is issued for the trial of persons accused of high treason, a grand jury, of not fewer than seventeen, and not more than twenty-one, have a power of returning as true or ignoring, the bills of indictment, if twelve of their number shall be of that opinion. But even with this limitation, the power of the lord advocate, more especially as relates to political offences, is such as to heighten the animosity, which the state of the elective franchise is calculated to produce, between the comparatively small portion of the Scottish people who are influenced by the hope or possession of office, and the much larger portion who are under no such influence.

The distance of the Athens from the seat of the executive and legislative powers of the empire; and the colouring which it is possible that a representation may receive from those who carry it to head-quarters, also tend to lessen the confidence which the people of Scotland might otherwise be disposed to place in the men who form as it were the official links of connexion between them and their King; and when it is considered how much connexion and influence can do even at head-quarters, it is easy to imagine how much greater their extent must be at such an outpost as the Athens.

There would be no end of a statement of the complaints which I found the independent Caledonians had to make against their delegated authorities. From what I saw in the Athens, and from what I heard in my excursion over the country, I could plainly discover that the people of Scotland are perhaps more uniformly and more sincerely devoted to all the better parts of the constitution, and to the person and family of the King, than the people of England; but I could at the same time perceive that they felt towards the immediate holders of Scottish power and office, a much stronger dislike than is to be found in England. At the same time, they all seemed anxious to make it appear that those official men wished to identify themselves, and even their failings, so much with

the general government of the country, that they were ever ready to denounce accusations against themselves as attacks on the government; and many instances were mentioned to me in which a very excusable, and, as I would have thought, a very deserved ridicule of a small man of office, had been considered and represented as the very next step to levying war upon the King.

The tendency which the Athenians have to make themselves, their sayings, and their doings, the grand objects of thought and conversation, helps to give currency and additional bitterness to this political rancour. If a scrap of paper which a procurator fiscal cannot read, or a sharp instrument of which a loyal magistrate cannot exactly understand the use, happen to be found in any district, more especially in any of the populous and manufacturing districts of Scotland, the chance is, that if there be any symptom in the public mind which sophistry can twist into an attitude of irritation, the one shall find its way to the Athens as a seditious circular, and the other as a rebellious pike. The official men of the Athens have no great knowledge of articles of these descriptions, and as of late years the lords advocates in particular have not only been a very sensitive and vigilant race, but have been of those mental dimensions which are the better for a discovery or two to give them

importance, there have, during those years, been things suspected of rebellious propensities, which would have been regarded as quite harmless in any other part of the island. A merchant who has extensive dealings with Russia, and who is also concerned in the north sea whale fishing, informed me that in the memorable year 1819, a few letters written in the Russian character, and two dozen of harpoons, were taken from his warehouse with great ceremony, forwarded to Edinburgh at considerable expense, and, as he supposed, cost the authorities there, not only much profound cogitation among themselves, but an application to the secretary of state, ere they were sent back to him. Indeed, were I to recount all the transactions of this description that were mentioned to me during my residence in Scotland, I should fill several volumes with instances of the lamentable and ludicrous effects of uninformed zeal in official men: to record such matters would, however, be an attempt to preserve the memory of persons and things which no effort could keep from oblivion.

In the peculiar politics of the Athens, it struck me, that though there are only two parties,—the men in office, with their connexions and dependants, and the men who are not in office,—yet that there are several distinct grounds of opposition, some of which neither party are very willing to

avow, and therefore they lump them all together in the convenient cant terms of Tory and Whig. Both parties are radically and substantially loyal; and both parties, though in different degrees, and sought for by different measures, may have a regard for the prosperity of their country generally, and for the glory and aggrandizement of the Athens, in a particular and pre-eminent degree; but still, their wars of the tongue, and the unseemly inroads which these wars make upon domestic prosperity and happiness, are just as unpleasant as though the one party were about to draw the sword for absolute despotism, and the other for blind and indiscriminate democracy.

The Athenian Tories are perhaps the most place-devoted race in the British dominions. Office is their god; and, as is sometimes the case with other devotees, their devotion is fervent in proportion to the feeling they have of their own unworthiness. In defence of that which they worship, they have no more variety of voice than the winged warders of the Roman capitol. Hence, as I said of the burghal magistracies, they cling to each other, and by that very means separate themselves more from the people than the necessity of the case requires. Their strength consists, mainly, in those imperfections of the elective franchise, and powers of the law officers of the Crown, to which I

have alluded; and as those cannot well be defended in argument, eloquence is of little use to them, and they seem to have no great partiality for those who possess it. When they make an attack as a body, in any other way than through the instrumentality of the law, (which they can employ only when the waters of society are a little troubled,) they do it snugly and covertly,—by letting people feel that they have the dispensing of rewards; by standing between a candidate and an office for which he is qualified, or by something of a similar kind. I was told that, at one period, and that not a very remote one, they would hit a man whose politics they did not like, through the medium of his banker; but latterly, the will or the power, or at any rate the practice of this, has been lessened, if not abolished.

At some periods, indeed, they have shown direct hostilities: they have spoken and written with considerable loudness, and considerable license; but the system, at least the local system, of which they have undertaken the championship, has not furnished them with sound principles or satisfactory arguments; and their mode of conducting themselves has shown that they were deficient both in skill and in tact. They have been exposed, certainly, and ashamed of themselves, very possibly.

The Athenian Whigs are a mixed multitude,

and though they all agree in their opposition to the other party, they are by no means agreed among themselves,—that is, as far as I could discover, they are not all influenced by the same principles, or seeking the same object. The party who are in office, have always among their opponents, and frequently foremost amongst them, a party whose principles and disposition differ not much from their own—namely, the party who wish to get in. As, however, those longers for office cannot, like the enjoyers of office, support themselves by their politics, they have no principle of union, and therefore do not, like the others, unfurl the ensigns, and raise the war-cry, as a party. Were they to do this, it would not only defeat their own object, but cause them to be more disliked by the independent part of the people, than the persons who are in possession. Feeding, whether with pudding or with place, has a tendency to smooth the turbulent passions; while hungering, whether for food or for office, has an effect exactly the opposite. Hence, even the Athenian placeman, whose appetite is most ravenous, and who is prone to snarl at those whom he suspects of a desire to take his portion from him, is the more civil from being in office, unless when he thinks that his honours or emoluments are in danger. Upon this principle, he is kind to those whom he thinks indifferent, and

polite, and occasionally generous, to all whom he imagines can strengthen his influence, without turning round in the end, and attempting to share it with him. Hence, also, the place-hunter, I mean him who hunts for it in opposition to the present holder, is always irritable and jealous, and keeps his wishes and his plans as much to himself as ever he can. Thus, such of the Athenian Whigs as would be placemen to the very core, if they had "good opportunities for the 'ork," are careful to blend, and lose if possible, their peculiar propensities, in the general mass of those who, without any specific or immediate view to their own personal interest, seek for a reform of what they conceive to be the political abuses of their country.

In this way, all that is selfish among the Athenian Whigs can be kept in the back-ground; and as the principles which they abet are much more rational in themselves, much more agreeable to the general feelings of mankind, and much better adapted for declamation, than those which their opponents profess—when they venture to profess any thing, the Whigs always have had, and always will continue to have, the best of the argument, and the finest of the eloquence upon their side. But though they be by far the most numerous, and the most specious, their chances of success bear no pro-

portion either to their numbers or the apparent superiority of their cause. The opposite party have the command of the public purse, and when the two parties strive, they are thus enabled to throw the expense of both sides upon their antagonists. Such are a few of the principles and practices of Athenian politics,—a war of words, of which it would be no easy matter to define the object, or calculate the end.

CHAPTER VI.

LAW OF THE ATHENS.

——— "Lawyers have more sober sense
Than t' argue at their own expense,
But make their best advantages
Of others' quarrels, like the Swiss;
And out of foreign controversies,
By aiding both sides, fill their purses."—BUTLER.

WHATEVER airs the Athens may give herself in other matters, however she may boast of her taste and her elegance, talk of her science and her literature, or cherish the mouldering skeleton of her medical school, no one can be a day within her precincts without discovering that the law is her Alpha and her Omega,—the food which she eats, the raiment she puts on, the dwelling-house which she inhabits, the conversation in which she engages, the soul which animates her whole frame, the mind which is discovered in every feature of her countenance, and every attitude of her body. Once destroy that, or remove it to another place, and the

pride of the Athens would be at an end: you might lodge owls in all her palaces, and graze cattle in all her streets.

From the way in which the Scottish courts of law are regulated, there is hardly a suit from the Solway Firth to the Pentland, or from Peterhead to the remotest of the Hebudæ, which does not look toward the Athens, the moment that the litigiousness of a client, or the machinations of an attorney, call it into existence. I hinted already, that there is no one thing in which the Athens can now retain a superiority except the practice of Scotch law; and, as Scotland increases in wealth, that law is so constructed, that the portion which the scribes and spouters of the Athens shall be enabled to levy upon their countrymen must always increase in a greater ratio. Scotchmen are apt to be proud of the Athens,—to regard her with a portion at least of that admiration which subjects pay to the pomp of their kings. There is propriety in this; for there is scarcely a stone in the walls of the Athenian palaces, or a decent coat in her streets, which has not been squeezed out of some litigious or unfortunate man of the provinces, in the shape of a lawyer's fee. I noticed the power which the crown lawyers of Scotland have over the liberties and lives of the people; and the power which lawyers of another class have over the fortunes of the

Scotch lairds, is every jot as ruinous and humiliating. There are complaints in England, that when once property gets into chancery, the "infant" becomes gray before he can enjoy it; but the Scottish chancery is incalculably worse; for the moment that a Scotch proprietor allows his lands to pass into the keeping of an Edinburgh agent, from that moment he must lay his account either with losing them altogether, or purchasing them anew; and to enumerate the heirs of Scottish families, who are at any time pining away in heart-broken obscurity, or toiling under the burning suns of the East or the West, in the hope of winning back a poor fragment of the ample heritage to which they were born, would require no trifling succession of pages.

It cannot indeed be otherwise. According to the definition of the political economists, law is not only unproductive labour in itself but wherever it clutches its talons, it tears away the funds by which more valuable labour should be supported, and distracts and lacerates the spirit by which those funds should be applied. When a Scotchman from the country visits the Athens, and sees a long line of costly buildings mounting up in the air, he may rest assured, that for every shilling that those buildings cost, and every shilling that shall be spent in them, he and his compatriots must pay.

The Athens herself,—the overtopping and overwhelming part of the Athens,—that part which rises by the power, and extends itself by the weight, of the law, produces nothing whatever. It is as sterile as the Castle rock; and, were it not for the folly of other people, its ascendency would not be so great as it makes the Athens feel. This, however, is a matter for the Scotch themselves; and it sometimes happens, with nations as well as with individuals, that a deformity or a vice is praised and cherished, while beauties and virtues are treated with neglect.

It is a matter of trite remark, that very few of the seed of Jacob have ever taken up their abode in the Athens, and that the few who have done so have in a short time been starved to death or to removal: and it has sometimes been wondered why a people, who have been so successful in pillaging the other nations of Europe, should have failed so completely in this instance. A very slight acquaintance with the Athenian "men of business," as they are called, will explain the fact, and resolve the difficulty. The man of business has all the natural rapacity and cunning of the Jew, and he is at the same time so well conversant with every quirk and turn of the law, that there is no possibility of calling him to account for his depredations.

Those hounds usually pursue their game in

couples. There is one who is called "the dining partner," whose business it is to watch for every inexperienced or expensive man of property, who happens to be spending a few days in the Athens, get invited to the same party with him, ply him with flattery, and when his weak side is once discovered, inflame his vanity upon that. Toward the close of the party, when the wine has circulated with that abundance and rapidity which are common in such cases, the dining partner becomes large in his professions of friendship. The victim swallows the bait with avidity; a meeting takes place in the kennel of the hounds next morning; and a loan of a few thousand pounds, being upon a first security, is negotiated in a manner which is quite fair and equitable; but the men of the law, when they go down to "take their infeftment" over the lands, contrive to suggest so many improvements that the supply is speedily exhausted; and, as it has created much more appetite than it has satisfied, another and a larger supply becomes necessary. The terms of this are a little different: money, which was in profusion upon the first occasion, is now difficult to be had. More than the legal interest would invalidate the security; but matters may be so managed, as to give a bond for payment of the interest, and repayment of the principal of fifteen thousand pounds, while ten

thousand only is advanced, The gates of ruin are now fairly opened; loan follows after loan, till the whole value of the lands be mortgaged, and the whole rents consumed in interest; and when matters have come to this situation, the men of business press a sale at a time which they know to be disadvantageous, and thus get into their own possession property, upon the improvement of which almost the whole of the sums advanced by them have been expended,—are, in short, much in the same situation as if they had got a present of the lands, and only laid out a few thousand pounds for their improvement. It is not the object of the men of business to retain a great deal of property in land; so they divide the lands into lots, sell them at a handsome profit, and retain the freehold qualifications, either to promote their own political interest, or to part with them for large sums in the event of a disputed election,—a matter which they are often known to bring about for this very purpose. Such are some of the blessings, which the legal men of the Athens bestow upon their country, in return for the fees with which it has previously fattened them.

But, notwithstanding many examples of this kind, there remains among that part of the Athenian lawyers who go by the name of "men of business," no small degree, both of talent and of

integrity, while, among the "men of profession,"—the advocates, or members of the Scotch bar, there are a few, for the reasons that were formerly stated, the very choicest spirits, not of the Athens merely, but of all Scotland. Though the occasions upon which these persons display their eloquence be merely of a private nature,—though a very large proportion of them have no eloquence to display, or no opportunity for displaying it; yet the profession of advocate is the only one in Scotland which makes the professor of it a gentleman; and among the people of the Athens, of all classes, the special pleaders before the Courts of Session and Justiciary,—the supreme civil and criminal courts of Scotland, take a deeper hold of the public mind in the Athens, and engross a greater share of the public attention, than the orators of St. Stephen's do in the British Metropolis.

One reason of this may be the way in which the different courts are blended together, and in which business is conducted. The Court of Session is a court of equity, as well as a court of law; and this is extremely favourable for the pleader, as the two characters blended together in the same oration give it a rich and popular character, which it can never have in the stiff formality of the English courts. Great part of the pleadings, too, are written; and this not only keeps the inferior

speakers from lowering the general tone of the bar, but enables the more celebrated to confine themselves to such general arguments as are best calculated for oratorical display. Another thing: criminal trials, which are ever the most interesting to the public, are not managed by the fag-end of the law, as at the Old Bailey; and the counsel for the prisoner is not limited to legal exceptions in the course of the trial, cross-questionings of witnesses, and motions in arrest of judgment and mitigation of punishment, after the jury have returned their verdict, and are beyond the reach of his eloquence, however touching or powerful. In the Scotch criminal court, whether in the Athens or at the provincial assizes, the law itself takes care that the prisoner, whatever be his crime, shall have the aid of counsel; and if the crime be remarkable, either from its enormity or on account of the character or rank of the party accused, then the very first counsel at the bar are ranged on his side. These are allowed full scope, both to attack the form of the case *in limine*, and to throw every suspicion upon the evidence, and make every appeal to the judgments and passions of the jury, that ingenuity can suggest, or eloquence apply. The official men who have the conducting of the prosecution, are not only, generally speaking, men of much smaller abilities than those who have the conduct-

ing of the defence, but upon political grounds, as well as from that general aversion which men have to the sanguinary operations of the law, the feeling of the public is opposed to them, and in favour of their antagonists.

There was nothing, indeed, with which I ever was better pleased, or in which I felt Old England so much inferior to her northern neighbour, as in the conducting of criminal trials. One who is in the habit of looking in at that great suttling-house for the gallows, the Old Bailey,—who sees the hurried manner in which the life of a man is, perhaps justly enough, sworn away,—who listens to the few seconds of advice, and the few trifling questions put by the counsel to whom the poor culprit has given the last shilling that he could beg from his weeping relations,—who marks the anxiety of the counsel till the case shall come to that point at which he may coldly abandon his miserable client—the very point at which an appeal to the jury might turn the scale,—cannot but feel, when he witnesses the slow and pathetic solemnity of the Scotch courts, that he is among pleaders of other powers. A case which brings even Theisseger to the bar, is one of no common importance, and one never by any chance finds the powers of Brougham, or the acuteness of Scarlett, come in to save a poor man from death. But when I was in the Athens, there

was only one trial for a capital crime, and yet the legal sagacity of Moncrieff, and the burning eloquence of Jeffrey, were exerted for full two hours, on behalf of the prisoner; and exerted, too, in such a manner as convinced me that the fee must have been the very least part of their inducement. I never heard objections put with so perfect a knowledge both of the general principles of law, or the specialities of the particular case, or evidence so scientifically dissected, as were done by the former; and the appeal of Jeffrey to the feelings of the jury, and even to those of the judges, was one of the finest things I ever heard. There are many men far more learned in the law than this celebrated Scotchman; and many who can take a far more sweeping and comprehensive view of a subject; but all the little sallies of which his speech consisted, were as sharp as needles and as shining as diamonds. Their brilliancy made you open your bosom to receive them, and their keenness was such that they would have pierced their way in spite of you. Their effect upon the crowded spectators, and upon the jury, was tremendous; nor was the lord justice clerk himself, who seemed not only a very proud and consequential person in himself, but by no means a hearty admirer of the barrister, able to resist the influence. Whenever Jeffrey tore away a pillar of the evidence against

his client, and clenched the advantage by an appeal to those passions which he seemed to know so well how to touch, there was a general hum of satisfaction in the crowd; the jurors looked up with eyes of new hope, as much as to say, "we shall be able to acquit him yet;" and the judge relaxed a little of the lofty severity of his countenance.

Another cause why the people of the Athens, and of Scotland generally, set so high a value upon the Athenian advocates, may be that they are the only class of persons among whom public speaking is so much as known. I do not mean to say that the Scotch have no talents for this kind of display. Quite the reverse; for instead of taciturnity, which their supposed cautious character would lead one to set down as their leading propensity, they are the most loquacious people,—I mean the longest-winded people that ever I met with; having, in their common conversation, ten times as much *badinage* and ornament as the English, and ten times more concatenation of ideas than the Irish.

But they have no subject to excite public speaking, and no occasion upon which to exercise it. Elections they have none, not even so much as a parish-meeting, or a wardmote. The only persons among them that have the privilege of electing even their own local managers, are "the Trades," or little corporations of artificers, in the royal

burghs, who annually choose "deacons;" but they usually do this more by the eloquence of liquor than of words, and as the deacons are commonly a sort of pack-horses to the burghal corporation, they fall into most of the sensual and senseless vulgarity which are the characteristics of it. Churches and hospitals supported by voluntary contribution, at the annual festivals of which the contributors may make speeches, there are none. Indeed, unless a Scotchman were to stand on a hill-side and address the wind, or on the sea-shore and address the waves, he has no scope for oratory; and thus, come from what part of the country he may, the pleadings before the courts at the Athens are quite a novelty to him, and he runs after and admires them as such. Thus the total absence of all eloquence throughout the country, makes a very small portion of it obtain distinction in the Athens.

Curious as it is to find a city where every soul is so much absorbed by the law, that men and women, girls and boys, of all ages and all conditions of life, season their common speech with the slang of legal phrases, and destructive of not only all literary and liberal taste, but of all the joyous intercourse of life, as it is to hear every night a rehearsal of Jeffrey's sarcasm, or Cockburn's joke of the morning; yet the Parliament-house of the Athens is a

spirit-stirring scene, and very delightful, compared with the gloomy desolation of Westminster-hall.

While the courts are sitting it is usually as crowded as the Royal Exchange at four o'clock, and the hum, and bustle, and eagerness, are vastly more interesting than the solemn faces and demure looks of the dealers in tallow and tapioca, who stand under the shadow of the Grasshopper, with their jaws distended like a trap for foxes, and their hands up to their elbows in their pockets, as if they could not abstain from fumbling money, even when the precise minute of bargain has not arrived.

It is true that you meet with no Rothschild, or any other pawnbroker for kings, in this ancient apartment of the Scottish Parliament; but, if you be more a lover of mind than of money, you are sure to meet with what will please you a great deal better. Before the Judges have taken their places in the Inner Courts, you cannot miss the tall figure, the gleesome grey eye, the snub nose, and all the other characteristics of the spirit of the wizard and the soul of the man, that mark Sir Walter Scott. A dozen of chosen friends, some Whig and some Tory, hang about him; and, as he limps along with wonderful vigour, considering the irregularity of his legs, peals of laughter ring at every word which he utters, and a score of fledgling Tory barristers, who have not yet got either a place or a

brief, stretch out their goose necks, huddle round, and cackle at the echo of that which they cannot possibly hear. In another place, or rather in all places, the Editor of the Edinburgh Review starts about like wildfire; and unless it be when an attorney ever and anon brings him up with the sheet-anchor of a fee and a brief, there is no possibility of arresting his motion. He darts aside like lightning, runs over the brief with such rapidity that you would think he was merely counting the pages of an article for the Edinburgh Review, and having handed it to his clerk, who seems as heavy as himself is agile, he again darts into the throng, like an otter into the waters, and is seen no more till he bring up another gudgeon.

Wherever you meet with this highly-gifted personage, you are never at a loss to distinguish him from every body else. His writings, his speeches, and his face, have the most remarkable family-likeness that I ever met with. All the three seem cut into little faucettes and angles, which glitter and sparkle in every possibility of light, both direct and oblique. In the speech and the writing, rich as is the play of genius on the surface, it bears no proportion to the mass of intellect which it covers and dazzles; and keen, acute, and purged of all grossness and obesity, as is the lower part of the face, it bears no proportion to the expansion of forehead

that towers above. Jeffrey has the most wonderful pair of eyes that ever illuminated a human visage. Even when he is shooting along like a small but swift meteor through the crowd in the Parliament-house, they are beaming so as to force you to turn away your eyes, and if he look at you, you find yourself utterly unable to withstand it. When that look is darting for any important purpose, such as to ascertain whether a witness be or be not speaking he truth, it is more searching than that of Garrow even in his best days, so that the most hardened tremble before it, and are instantly divested of all power of concealing the truth. If, however, you attempt to repay Jeffrey in his own coin, by working into his mind with that sharp and anatomical glance which he employs in dissecting the minds of other people, you find that you are wofully mistaken. Those eyes, which can penetrate to the bottom of any other man's heart, and expose even that part of it which he studies with the greatest assiduity to conceal, are a perfect sealed book to you; you cannot see beyond their external surface, and they give you not so much as a hint of what the owner is thinking, or what he may be disposed to say or do next. Wonderful as the eyes are, they are perhaps exceeded by the eyebrows, and certainly two such intellectual batteries were never alternately masked and displayed in a manner so singular.

They range over a greater extent of surface, and twist themselves into a more endless variety of curves than is almost possible to conceive, and while they do so, they express all manner of thoughts, and utter all descriptions of sentences. Few men have more eloquence in their speech than Jeffrey, and I have met with none who had half as much in his face.

Another character in this reeling crowd, which never fails to attract the attention of a stranger, is that of Robert Forsyth. As far as one man can be unlike another, he is the very antipodes of Jeffrey. He is large, square, and muscular, more intended by nature, you would think, for breaking stones on the high road, than for breaking syllogisms before their Lorships. His face is coarse, broad and flat, and as immovable in all its muscles as though it had been chiselled out of a block of granite. As he moves along, he turns his head neither to the one side nor to the other; and indeed he does not require it, for his eyes have that divergent squint which enables him at once to scan both sides of the horizon. The lines of labour are so ploughed across and across every part of this ample countenance, and they give it so knotted and so corrugated an appearance, that you can easily perceive he has followed more occupations, and been attached to more sides of politics than one. Still there is by no means the quiescence of a mind at

ease upon the strong picture of his visage; the lower part of it is fixed in something between a half laugh and a half grin, and the upper part has a firmness about it which tells you he is a through-going lawyer, whom it will not be easy to turn from his purpose.

The throng is so great, however, and the variety of faces, gowned and ungowned, wigged and unwigged, beaming forth every shade of mind, and betokening every degree of mental vacuity, is so perplexing, that your eye and your imagination are completely bewildered, and you cannot attend either to individuals or single groups, while the buz of voices of so many different tones and pitches give your ears the impression of a very Babel.

Business commences; the Lords Ordinary take their seats—in places which make them look more like as if they were standing in the pillory than any thing else. But even there, advocates are drudging in their vocations; agents running backwards and forwards with briefs; clients watching the result with palpitating hearts; and the Athenian loungers hanging about, anticipating their Lordships in the decision of the several cases. The well-employed advocates now put you very much in mind of shuttle-cocks. They run from bar to bar, making motions here and speeches there, in the most chaos-looking style that can be imagined. Of the whole gown

and whig mass, it is but a small portion, however, who are thus occupied; four-fifths of the whole keep trudging on from end to end of the hall, and seem never to expect or even to get a fee; while the bar clerks collected round the fire-places keep up a continual titter at the repetition of all the good jokes of the day; and the same scene continues day after day, and month after month. You are astonished that a place, the real business of which is so dull and so dry, should have charms for so many idle people; but except this Parliament-house there is not another in-door lounge in the whole Athens; and as the business of the courts forms the chief topic of the evening's conversation, many attend for the purpose of qualifying themselves for displays upon a very different arena. It is long before a stranger can bring himself to relish this first and most favourite of all Athenian pleasures. I, for one, got tired of it in two or three days, and began to be of opinion that, however much this fondness for legal proceedings may sharpen the wits of the Athenian idlers, it is but a sorry treat for those who have no wish either to get rich by the acting, or wise by the suffering of the law.

When the business of the day is over, you can perceive the veteran barristers taking council together as to where they may be joyous for the night; and the younger legal men of all descriptions hur-

rying off toward Princes Street, in order that they may show themselves to the Athenian fair, before they retreat to drown the daily badgerings in the nightly bowl.

CHAPTER VII.

LEARNING OF THE ATHENS.

—— "As a dog that turns the spit
Bestirs himself, and plies his feet,
To climb the wheel, but all in vain,
His own weight brings him down again,
And still he's in the self-same place,
Where, at his setting out, he was;
So, in the circle of the arts,
Do they advance their nat'ral parts,
Till falling back still, for retreat,
They fall to juggle, cant, and cheat."

If, in her metropolitan status as the seat of Caledonian law, the Athens be fixed as the dog-star, as the seat of Caledonian learning, she has been and must be, changeful as the moon. If the wealth of her lawyers "swells like the Solway," the renown of her philosophers "ebbs like its tide." The very same cause which raises the one,—which makes all hearts envy, all eyes admire, all knees worship, and all tongues speak the Babylonish dialect of special pleaders, comes cold and curdling

as December's ice over every thing else; and though there may be an occasional spring of the living water of the mind, which has its source too deep, or its current too thoroughly imbued with the immortal fire, for submitting to the cold congelation; yet such glorious instances must be few and far between. Even in the law itself, there may be green branches, just as there are green branches on the Upas; but, like the Upas, the law, or indeed any thing else which is so overpowering in its influence as the law is in the Athens, must in itself monopolize all the greenness, and etiolate and wither every thing that attempts to grow under its broad and gloomy shade. Whatever promises the chief reward will, under any circumstances, always attract the chief talent; and the state of the whole British dominions, and of the Athens not less than any other portion of them, is at present such as not to be exceedingly favourable to the pursuits of abstract and recondite philosophy. Luxury has found out for all those who have money to spend without working for it,—whether they have it as a legitimate heritage from their natural parents, or as the adopted children of that great nursery-mother of idlers, the state, abundant employment,—full occupation from every hour that they can snatch from the pangs of intemperance and the pillow of sleep, not only without profound philosophy, but

without thought of any description that reaches beyond the enjoyment of the moment; and the number of these persons, especially the latter division of them, is so very considerable, that, of the remaining independent portion of the British people, none can afford to be philosophic or learned upon any other terms than those of being paid for it,—taking it up, and following it as a trade, as much as other men do the boring of cannon, or the building of bridges. That this is unquestionably true of the whole country, may be established from the philosophical publications, whether regular or periodical, which make their appearance at the present day. Of the regular class, there has not, so far as I know, been published, within the last thirty years, in any part of the British dominions, a single original work, that will transmit the name of its author to posterity. There have indeed been books, and books in which there have been the details of new experiments, and occasionally scraps of theories; but, like successive days in the kalendar, the one has usurped the place and extinguished the remembrance of the other; and, at the present moment, the most unmarketable article which an author could carry to a bookseller would be a profound treatise on any of the sciences. With regard to periodical learning again, (I use the word "learning" as distinguished from and

even opposed to literature,) the case is very nearly the same. The philosophical journals, of all the periodicals, have the most limited circulation, are the least read, and the least worth the reading,—just because the proprietors of them cannot afford to pay for the labour which it would require to make them better.

Now if this be the case with the British dominions generally, and with the British metropolis, where every species of talent has the means of being stimulated to the greatest exertion, and where every exertion meets with the most ample reward, much more must it be the case in the Athens, where there is not only no adequate remuneration for the labours of learning, but where there is a more honoured and rewarded pursuit, constantly soliciting the choice not only of the Athenian, but of the Scottish talent generally, away from it. It cannot be hoped that when a man of very ordinary talents can get a comfortable living and honourable distinction in society, by managing the estates of Scotch lairds, or the causes of Scotch litigants, men of superior ability will consent to starve in obscurity for the love of learning or of science. Mankind have become to the full as mercenary in their intellectual as in their civil marriages; and the Athenian muses, like the Athenian maidens, pine in unwooed neglect, because they have no dowry.

The Athenian University was long the boast of the Athens, not only as a school of philosophy, and a school of medicine, but as a general school of learning; and, with the exception, perhaps, of the latter, the titles were, in the case of a few illustrious men, well earned. Those times have, however, gone by, and the Athenian university, pressed down by the general circumstances of the Athens, and yet more by the peculiar circumstances of its own patronage, has sunk to rise no more.

Universities, indeed, have much of the general character of stars,—they shine brightest when all else is dark; and fade, if they do not disappear, when illumination becomes general. While the people, generally speaking, are ignorant, they are lights in the path of learning; but when the people become generally well informed, they are not much better than lumber. This would be their fate in general illumination, under any circumstances; but it is peculiarly so, in the circumstances under which —or rather, in spite of which, knowledge is at present spreading over the British dominions. The same cause which renders abstract studies unprofitable, must render the systems of universities unpopular, except in so far as the name of being there is necessary for professional purposes; and where the name is all that men actually need, they will not burden themselves with much of the thing

named. If it were not that there are such things as fellowships, fat dinners, facilities for juvenile dissipation, church and other livings, a key to certain offices, and a general nominal eclât, which in so far serves as a substitute for real information, it is very possible that several halls in Oxford and Cambridge would be abandoned to bats and spiders,—that "the two eyes of England" would be left "for daws to peck at;" and it was pretty plain to me, from the general tenour of the Athenian feeling, as expressed in the Athenian speech, that, if the attendance of certain classes of her university were not required for those who plaster the consciences of Caledonian sinners, and who bring down the tone of the Caledonian pulse, or the Caledonian purse, her learned Thebans would be allowed to deliver their prelections to the stones in the wall, and the beam of the timber. In as far, therefore, as I could see and reason from circumstances, there is much, both in the feeling of the people in the Athens, and in the causes by which that feeling is produced, to render the decline of learning certain on the one hand, while there is little or nothing of a counteracting tendency on the other.

In addition to this, in as far as the university is concerned, there is the infliction of perhaps the very worst patronage that could be devised or even imagined. I have noticed already, what a precious

piece of work the corporations, or, as they are termed, "the councils" of the royal burghs, are in Scotland. In itself, there is nothing to render that of the Athens better than any of the others; and, in close juxtaposition with it, there is something which tends to make it worse. The whole town-councils in Scotland are, their attention to their own personal interests excepted, ignorant, unreasoning, and passive tools in the hands of the ruling faction. If the actual leaders of that faction have not their actual residence in the Athens, it is there that they find the hands which do their work. Those hands belong to men, who not only have a better education than the Athenian magistrates, but who perform more important functions, and perform them in the face, and for the weal or the woe, of the whole of Scotland, To them, therefore, the magistrates of the Athens are inferior; and this circumstance, taken in conjunction with the inferiority which the whole system of the Scotch burghs tends to stamp upon the magistrates, renders the said civic rulers of the Athens the most unfit patrons of a school of philosophy, or indeed of any thing learned or liberal, that human imagination could devise. Not only this; but the superior talents, at least the superior pretensions, of the other functionaries alluded to, will throw the civic worthies into their train as followers; and thus,

whatever patronage they exercise, will have to sustain, in addition to their own sheer dulness, the dead, deadening weight of the party politics of the country,—a combination of stupidity and slavery, under which that system were either greater or less than human, which could flourish in a rational and liberal manner.

When it is known that the provost, bailies, counsellors, and deacons of the Athens,—seldom men of any education, and never men of any genius,—*cum avisamento eorum ministrorum*, (which, being interpreted, signifies, "without benefit of clergy,") have the sole power of electing the greater number of professors in the Athenian university,—when it is considered that the remaining ones are nominated by the crown, in other words, by the leading faction in Scotland for the time,—and when it is borne in mind that the said provosts, bailies, counsellors, and deacons, are little else than a pair of bagpipes, upon which the said faction discourses whatsoever music it chooses,—it will become but too apparent, that the chances of having the professors' chairs filled by the very fittest men possible are about as small as can well be estimated. That ignorant men should have the power of appointing professors of learning is in itself a very great absurdity; and that the ignorant men to whom such a power is delegated, should themselves

be tacked to the tail of a political faction for the purpose of retaining places, contrary both to reason and their own abilities, makes the matter, theoretically considered, a great deal worse. I have no wish to accuse the civic archons of the Athens of wilful abuse in the exercise of this patronage; but I have seen them, I have heard them speak, and I have noticed the estimation in which they are held; and, by a very charitable induction from all these circumstances, I cannot help coming to the conclusion, that they are totally incapable of their own knowledge, of determining who is, or who is not, a fit person for being porter to the Athenian college, far less professor of the humblest art or science held forth upon within its walls, not even excepting the professor of agriculture, or, as he is aptly termed, "the doctor of dunghills."

Accordingly, though in times past, and not very long past, there have been found, in sundry chairs of the Athenian university, men who would have done honour to any college in any country, I looked for a continuation of men of the same talents and eminence; but though I looked for them, I found them not. The time has not long gone by, when the principal of that university was numbered, if not with the most learned and profound, at least with the most elegant of historians; but I should be glad to be informed of what person, or thing,

or circumstance, the being that I found holding the supreme sway in the Athenian university, and in its metropolitan name, presenting himself before the King, as a specimen and representative of all the universities of Scotland, could write the history. It is true, that the office of this person is not much else than a sinecure, as he seldom comes before the public, except when his name stands rubric to a diploma; but, if an image is found with a wooden head, people are apt to turn away, without any very much examination of the limbs. It is said, more wittily than wisely perhaps, among the fledglings at the seats of science in the south, that "whatever may be the walls, the heads of houses are most commonly of lead;" and the saying might be carried to the Athens, if it were worth the trouble. I was told that, if at some former point of Athenian history, this personage had not been a bachelor, and the daughter of a quondam provost of the Athens a damsel to be wooed, the college of the Athens might have gone all unprincipaled for him; but the Athenians are so prone to drill holes in the glory of each other, that one never knows how much of their story to believe.

Still, if the nomination of the masters of Eton and Winchester, and the doctors of Isis and Cam, were deputed to the corporation of London, England would tremble for her learned fame; and yet,

no one can deny that the court of aldermen, notwithstanding the mental and corporeal obesity of which they are accused, are far more promising patrons for such purposes, than the town-council of the Athens. Their own election depends upon a greater number of persons, and before they can carry it, they must have some superiority over the freemen of their ward,—the means of flattering and bribing them, if nothing else; but, in the Athens, there is not the smallest test of talent previous to a man's being chosen an elector of professors; and, therefore, no pledge that he either will or can exercise that function in a proper manner.

The "*avisamentum eorum ministrorum*" has no tendency to amend the matter; for the advice which these worthies are most likely to give, is, that themselves are the fittest of all possible professors,—a proposition, of which the theoretical doubts are great, and they are not lessened by experience.

The ministers of the Edinburgh Kirks, appointed by the same persons as the professors, may be presumed to be appointed upon the same principles; and thus, though they were conjoined with the others, in the university nominations, it would be but an increase of the evil,—the addition of the political son to that of the political father; or, as Professor Leslie whould express it,

"a combination of direct and retroflected dulness."

In consequence of these circumstances, the *eorum ministrorum* have usurped every professor's chair in the Athenian college which can be by any sophistry twisted into a compatibility with the functions of a minister of the Kirk. After the very Reverend personage who, as aforesaid, groans under the load of the principality (not of Wales), the chairs, not only of divinity, church history, and Hebrew, but of logic and rhetoric, and the Belles Lettres are in the hands of the Athenian priests. Now, though a parson *in esse* be the most likely person to teach divinity and church history, because those who are parsons *in posse* are the only persons that are likely to dip deeply into such studies; though, in a country where Jews do not thrive, it be a matter of no great moment who shall teach Hebrew, and though logic and rhetoric, as they are usually taught, be no weighty matters, yet there are substantial reasons why no officiating clergyman in the Athens should hold any chair whatever in the college.

In the first place, the Kirk of Scotland, at least according to her book of discipline, recognises no clergyman who does not perform the whole of his duties in his own person. She will have no "dumb dogs who cannot bark," and if they bark to the ex-

tent that she points out, they will have no strength left even to hunt syllogisms in *Bar-ba-ra*, or to nozzle up Hebrew roots. The minister of the Kirk is, by its constitution, presumed not only to reside in his parish, and perform divine service every Sunday, but to devote the whole of the week, that is, as much of *every* day of it, as other men of a similar rank in life are supposed to devote to business, to visiting his people at their houses, and receiving their visits at his own, instructing and catechising the young, recommending the destitute to the charity of the Kirk Session, praying by the bed-side of the dying, and performing a number of other little offices of religion and charity, which are supposed to be imperiously binding upon him in virtue of his solemn vow of ordination. Ministers of the Kirk are furthermore not understood to purchase their annual stock of "*Conciones Selectæ*" in the bookseller's shop, as is the case in some other places; and thus every spare hour from the parochial duties of the week is presumed to be taken up in preparing for the pulpit duties of the Sunday. Hence a minister of the Scottish Kirk, who is in the possession of a cure, cannot, in conscientious accordance with the oath that he takes when he is inducted, or with the practical duties which he ought to perform, accept of a professorship even of divinity or Hebrew. Either the church-living should be such as to

occupy by its duties, and reward by its emoluments, the whole of the incumbent's time, or it should be so altered as to bring it to this state.

With regard to the professorships, again, it is extremely doubtful whether even such of them as divinity and church history can be profitably placed in the hands of the parsons; at any rate, one would very naturally think that the duties of a professor's chair should be sufficiently arduous for occupying the whole of a mind as large as that which falls to the ordinary run of clerical persons; while, in the case of those of logic and rhetoric, the arts required in the Parliament-House, the grand theatre of logical wrangling and rhetorical display, not only in the Athens, but for all Scotland, the clumsy concatenation and leaden style which I heard, even in the Athenian pulpits, are strong presumptive evidence against the propriety of having them intrusted to clerical hands.

But it is not to those professorships alone that *eorum ministrorum* aspire. Not many years have gone by since the whole Athens was thrown into confusion, because one of the brethren was not permitted to squelch his carcass into the chair of mathematics, and become the successor of Mac Laurin, and Stewart, and Playfair; and had he succeeded, the Athenians would perhaps ere now have had a clerical expounder of "Dirlton's Doubts" in the

chair of law, and a holder forth in the Tron Kirk wielding the anatomical scalpel during the week. The objections taken to the better-qualified candidate upon that occasion, were such as to throw considerable light upon the feeling of *eorum ministrorum* toward the university, and to enable one to form a pretty accurate guess at what will be its state if their unquenchable longing for it shall ever be fully satisfied. The exception which they took was a grave charge of infidelity, founded upon an allusion to David Hume, contained in a note to a purely philosophic book, and a book, too, which, both from its subject and its style, was never likely to get into general circulation, and would be read by nobody, merely on account of the note—the only part which was impugned as being contrary to the canons of orthodoxy.

It must be allowed that, if its patronage were at all in decent hands, the constitution of the Athenian university is not bad. The salaries of the professors are all so small, that if the livings are worth the acceptance of men of talent, they must be chiefly made up of the small annual fees payable by the students. This is a very wholesome plan, and tends more to reward every one according to his real merits than that which obtains at most other places. The patronage, however, with the three elements of civil ignorance, political influence, and clerical intrigue,

arranged against the single and undefined good of the institution, is more than enough to paralyze all the good which that principle, properly supported, or even let alone, would be capable of effecting.

Those evils have begun to pervade the whole system. As the Athens is the grand seat of lawyers, there will always be students for the law classes, increasing with the increase that there is for lawyers; but in every thing else the poison of decay had been infused, and the decay itself has become visible. With the exception of Leslie, who has written some very flaming articles in the Edinburgh Review, and some books in which the path of geometry is made a little more thorny than ever; of Jamieson, who has been most learned on slate and granite; and Wilson, who has indited some pretty lake poetry, and some pitiful political prose, of which he is said to be now highly ashamed,—I did not hear that any of the Athenian professors have put in a single claim for immortality. Even in her anatomical school, that upon which she rested her fame the longest and the most securely, the recent falling off has been great; and of all those who now shine in the lists of her *senatus*, there is none able to hold the book for Gregory, or the scalpel for old Monro, or light the furnace for Black. I understand that for the fragments of her medical school that remain, the Athens is almost wholly dependant upon private

lecturers; that the students pay their fees and enter their names at the college, not with any view of attending the classes there, but because the fees and entries are necessary for the ceremony of graduation. But for the celebrity of her professors, the Athens possesses no advantages as the locality of a medical school. From the nature and pursuits of the Athenian society, there is neither that variety of patients, nor that variety of cases, which is found in cities even of equal population, where a large portion of the people are engaged in manufactures. That it is as good in this respect as Glasgow begins to be doubted, as a considerable number of medical students now attend the Glasgow college in preference; and that it is any way comparable to London, as a school of surgery, no one can suppose. If the medical glory of the Athenian college continue to decrease as it has done for some time, that college will soon become, like the Athens herself, a pensionary upon the law and the politics of Scotland.

But if there be those causes of mortality in the college, there is not much hope of life in any of the other philosophic institutions of the Athens. Royal societies are no where much better than coteries of old wives; and, judging from their recent pursuits, that of the Athens can form no exception to the general character. That a poet

and novelist should be the president of such an institution, is proof that the number of Athenian philosophers cannot be great; and however successful and deserving of success such a person may be in his other and lighter capacity, he is not the most likely man to give soundness and solidity to the speculations of philosophers. The fact is, that with the exception of the teacher of a class, and the editor of an Encyclopedia, (who are of course but very heavy and humdrum persons,) and a wisdom-struck squire or two, who take to the amusement of the small philosophy of mosses and muscle-shells, rather than the small carpentry of snuff-boxes and fiddles, and who would be quite eclipsed in any other place, there is nothing in the Athens which can be called an amateur philosopher, and of the professional ones I have already spoken.

In their philosophical opinions, the Athenians are an absolute pendulum, and when the history of their swingings this way and that way is looked at, they seem to be a pendulum which has no continued stimulus of motion, but of which the oscillations, though not fewer in number, gradually become more and more insignificant in range. While David Hume was lord of the ascendant, the Athenians doubted every thing but their own wisdom and importance; under Adam Smith, they consi-

dered "moral sentiments" as being valuble only in "theory," and learned "economy" in their "politics," by bringing all their disposal votes and vices to the best market. Under Robertson, they knew all history; and with Blair, every sentence was taken from the storehouse of the Belles Lettres, and measured by the gauge of Rhetoric. When Reid and Dugald Stewart turned the tables upon the sceptics, the Athenians were entirely composed of intellectual or of active powers, and they were drawn and held by the sweetest cords of association. With Playfair, they attempted to go quitely to the very depth of philosophic systems; and anon, they started to the moon with Dr. Brewster. While Leslie was new, they burned and sweated with him in all the ardour of radiant caloric; and now they lie upon mossy banks, prepared for them by Brewster, Jamieson, and Sir George, and listen to the tales of Sir Walter, or to the ghost stories of Dr. Hibbert. Thus have opinions changed, and importances have faded away; but the Athenians have in their nature remained the same. So change the phases of the moon, now beamy, anon blank; now pushing her horns eastward, now westward,—but still the same dark globe, without light save that which it has at second-hand from another.

CHAPTER VIII.

LITERATURE OF THE ATHENS.

Pol. What do you read, my lord?
Ham. Words, words, words!
Pol. What is the matter, my lord?
Ham. Between who?
Pol. I mean the matter that you read, my lord.
Ham. Slanders, Sir. SHAKSPEARE.

If there be nothing by which the Athens really profits so much as her law, there is nothing of which she is so ready, or so willing to boast, as her literature. That is, as it were, her Benjamin—her youngest-born child—the darling of her dotage, so to speak; and it is loved and lauded in proportion to the lateness of its appearance.

In the whole literature of Scotland there is, indeed, a wonderful hiatus,—an interruption, for which it would be impossible to account, if one were not to look at her political and religious history. Previous to the Reformation, the bards of Scotland sung as sweetly, and her monks were as

full and fabulous in their chronicles as those of any other part of the world; and that dawn of intellect —that day-spring of the mind, shone as warmly and as well upon the bleak hills of Caledonia, as upon the green pastures of more fertile lands. The classical elegance, and the keen and searching satire of Buchannan, the stern and stubborn eloquence of Knox, and the polished but manly sentences of Melville, will bear a comparison with any thing that appeared contemporaneously in other countries: but after them, there comes a dreary and desolate blank; and while other nations are rapidly running the career of knowledge, adding book to book, and illustrious name to illustrious name, Scotland appears not in the catalogue, except in a manner which is even more melancholy than if she appeared not at all. How is this to be accounted for? In theory it would be impossible: with the facts before one, it becomes the easiest thing in the world.

No sooner had the morning of the Reformation shone upon Scotland, than her horizon was obscured by the clouds of civil war; and scarcely were her men prepared for taking up the pen for the information and amusement of their fellows, when they were obliged to draw the sword for their defence; and that energy which in happier times would have trimmed the lamp of science, and

tuned the harp of song, was obliged to struggle night and day, if so be that it could preserve but a spark of liberty, or even keep the life. That despotism and debauchery, which Mary the Regent and Mary the Queen attempted, through their French connexions, and by means of their French mercenaries, to introduce into Scotland, was of itself sufficient to render the intellectual improvement of the country stationary for an age; and though the resistance with which it met tended not only to preserve but to strengthen the free spirit of the people, it forbade the cultivation of the arts of peace. The conduct of James, all shuffling and pedantic as it was, did not, while he remained in Scotland, tend to make matters improve; and upon his removal to England, Scotland may be said to have been given up to that delegated despotism of influence, which, under various forms and names, has continued to afflict her to the present day, and must so continue till an uniformity of civil and political law be established over the whole island. From the beginning of the troubles under Charles, to the Revolution in 1688, the state of Scotland was such as to leave literature entirely out of the question. The great body of the people—at least of that part of them who otherwise might have studied, or rewarded the study of literature, were not only driven from all places congenial for lite-

rary purposes, but even from the fastnesses of the mountains, and the caves of the rocks; and though a Scotchman was occasionally returning from foreign parts to let his countrymen know what the rest of the world were doing, terror and oppression were too general for promoting any imitation. At that time, too, one half the extent of Scotland was in a state of the most abject ignorance: the feudal law, in the Highlands, was in full exercise; and when all the chiefs could not read, it was not to be expected that there would be much taste for literature among their vassals. Thus, it was not till the termination of the second rebellion in favour of the Stuarts, in 1745, that the people of Scotland generally began to have a literary taste. A sure foundation for such a taste had, indeed, been previously laid, in the provision that within every parish in Scotland there should not only be a school, but a school so regulated as that the poorest, as well as the most opulent, might reap the benefit of it; but up to this period, and indeed for some time after, the literature of those schools was confined to the catechisms of the church and the reading of the Bible; and if any literary work found its way into a Scotch farm-house or cottage, if large, it was a treatise on mystic or polemical divinity, and if small, it was a legendary ballad, or a sermon by some pious divine, whose style was not the most

classical, or his language the most easily understood.

It is not, indeed, fifty years since there was any thing like a regular bookseller, or a printing-press employed for literary purposes, in the Athens. Before that time, there were persons who sold Bibles, and catechisms, and ballads, and penny almanacks, in divers nooks about Libberton Wynd and the Lucken Booths; and there were printers who, when a process before the Court of Session became too voluminous, or when the parties could not afford to pay for as many written copies as were necessary, put the eloquence of the advocates, and the wisdom of the judges, into types. An occasional parson, too, would become so far enamoured of his own powers of holding forth, as to have a sermon, or homily, upon some question of the catechism, or point of the confession of faith, printed and published; but previous to the year 1780, it was very rare indeed to find an Athenian bibliopole speculating in any literary work, the price of which was to be more than sixpence; and as for paying a man for literary labour, the Athenians would as soon have thought of paying a Lapland witch for procuring foul weather.

With regard to the literature of the Athens, it is worthy of remark that the time of George the Third corresponded with that of Anne in England;

and that when the style of writing south of the Tweed was changing to another, if not to a better model, the wits of the Athens were imitating the Tatlers and Spectators.

The era of the French revolution was a remarkable one in the literature, if not particularly of the Athens, at least of the rest of Scotland; and the reading of the pamphlets of that time, which probably the people would have been as well without, led to the establishment of subscription libraries throughout the country, and made those readers, and in some measure critics, in general literature, whose whole course of study had previously been theological. But until very recently, the periodical literature of the Athens was hardly deserving the name. The Athenian newspapers were always dull and spiritless ,and while the politics of the Athens remain what they are, there is no chance that they shall become better. In the provincial parts of Scotland, I met with several journals written with great taste, spirit, and liberality; but in the Athens, there is only one worth naming,—the "Scotsman;" and that, whether through fear of the party or from what other cause, I know not, I found not to be such as I would have expected. I found it a sensible production, certainly, and as much superior to the others as can well be imagined; but it is by no means what would be expected from people pre-

tending to so much intellect and freedom, as the party by whom it was supported.

If the "Scotsman" had appeared in London, it would not have produced almost any sensation. It would have been allowed to take its place far down in the list of weekly journals; but in the Athens, I was told that it excited no small degree of alarm among the official men. Just about that time, a blow had been given to that bank influence by which they had been in the habit of crushing every opponent to their measures, whom they could not get indicted and brought to trial; and this, together with the strong and general feeling against them that was at that time spread over the country, and the appearance of a free journal, even at the very seat of their power, which dared not merely to dispute their principles, but even to expose their practice, was enough to alarm those who were not accustomed to any opposition, and whose hands were understood to be not over and above clean. When the early numbers of the "Scotsman" were distributed over the city, spies were appointed to dog the messengers, and take a note of those at whose houses copies were delivered; and it was generally believed that the lists were transcribed for the edification both of the crown lawyers and of the Athenian magistrates.

But the greatest and most extraordinary step

that ever was taken in the periodical literature of the Athens, or indeed of any country, was the appearance of the Edinburgh Review,—a work, the boldness, spirit, and originality of which were at the time altogether unprecedented, and which never yet have been, and probably never will be, equalled. The Edinburgh Review was happy both in the time and the manner of its appearance. Periodical literature had been quite stagnant in the Athens from the time of the Loungers and Mirrors; and they had become too trifling for the awakened and agitated spirit of the age. In London there were some reviews, but the best of them were in the hands of religious sectaries, who puzzled themselves and plagued their readers with questions which nobody could solve, and nobody would have taken the trouble to solve, even if they could. The whole of them were either tame or timid; and folks continued to buy them rather with a view of keeping their sets unbroken till chance should introduce amendment, than from any desire to read them. The war which had just terminated had been expensive, and excepting those for whom offices had been obtained, there was nobody with whom it had ever been popular; and the war that was beginning, or begun, had not much to recommend it. There was, indeed, much to say against the conduct of the Continental courts, and even

against that of the English administration; people were well prepared and anxious to hear it; and there was no publication of the day of sufficient interest in any way to divide or divert the attention. The Review came like thunder; and to give it the more effect, it came like thunder when the air is still, and when men are listening.

Great, however, as was the talent displayed in the Review, and wide and wonderful as was the sensation which it produced upon its very first appearance, the Athens had little merit in it, except the mere name. The publisher, though he subsequently rose as high in that trade as any English publisher of the time, was then but a young man, not much known, and not much recognised or esteemed by the Athenians; the editor was also a young man, recently returned from England; and the most spirited contributors to the very early numbers, had by no means had their minds formed upon the Athenian model. The effect which the Review produced was also not perhaps so great in the Athens as in London; and it was only when it had taken its place in the literary world, and the acknowledgment of it was an honour, that the Athenians began to identify it with themselves, and at no time was the identification general,—nor could the whole talent of the Athens,

even when in its best days, have supported the Review for a single year.

Besides, though the real ability of the Edinburgh Review was great, the vast popularity which it so speedily obtained, and the brilliant course which it ran, were unquestionably more owing to the novelty of its plan, and the fact of its advocating those political principles which were agreeable to the majority of people at that time, than to its merits.

One cause of the rise of the Edinburgh Review, and perhaps also one cause of its comparative fall, is the uniformity with which it has all along followed the Whig party. Before that party got into office, and when, in consequence of their boldness and lofty pretensions as oppositionists, the opinions of the Edinburgh Review,—at least, its political opinions,—which were all along the ones upon which the greater part of its celebrity rested, —were by many received as the infallible oracles of truth; and when the trial which the country had had of that party shook them a little in public estimation, though the Review received a shock along with them, it still retained a considerable portion of its influence. But, as the opinions of men became a little more liberal, and the frequency of disappointment made them more and more sus-

picious of all parties, some Jesuitical articles in the Review, on the subjects of representation and reform, shook the confidence of the people in it; while, much about the same time, or, at least, not long afterwards, the failure of its prophecies with regard to the ultimate success of Buonaparte, laid it open to the attacks of the Tories. For the first of these suspicions, there appeared to be but too much foundation; and though the latter was more Jesuitical than just, still it was the interest of the parties to press it to extremity. When the Edinburgh Review predicted the ultimate triumph of Napoleon, it did not, of course, anticipate, that he would, with the example of Charles XII. before him, undertake so hazardous an enterprise as a winter campaign into the interior of Russia; but the Review did not enter a caveat against such an excursion; and, therefore, it was held as prophesying in the face of this as well as of all the other chances.

I have noticed those circumstances with a view of showing, not only that the absolute literary merits of the Edinburgh Review were not the sole cause of its popularity, but that even though they had, the merit does not in whole, or even in the greater part, belong to the Athens. The Athens never could, of her own will, ability, and patronage, support a single literary man; and it could

not well be expected that she could, for any length of time, support a literary work.

The first of these positions may be established by a reference to the history of the whole literary men of the Athens, as well as to the state which they are in at the present time; and the second, besides being a necessary and legitimate deduction from the first, may be confirmed by an appeal to the facts.

Allan Ramsay was the first Athenian writer, after the hiatus of which I have spoken; and Allan addressed himself as much to the taste and foibles of the Athens as it was possible for one of so limited education and limited powers to do. Allan made a comfortable living; but he did not make that as a poet; he did it, first, as a hair-dresser, and then as a bookseller, and as the keeper of a circulating library, which, being the first of the kind in the Athens, proved a most fortunate speculation. The works of Colin Maclaurin, and some of the other illustrious men, of which the Athens never was worthy, were put into circulation as much in the way of charity to their families, as from any love for those sciences and arts of which they were the ornaments.

Robert Ferguson was pre-eminently the poet of the Athens. Born within her walls, he devoted his muse to the chanting of her praises; and how

did she reward her tuneful son? Why, she blamed him because he wrote verses rather than law papers; he liked his songs, and she sung them; but she would give him no reward for his labour; and poor Ferguson, neglected, heart-broken, and starved, ended his days in a mad-house; and his ungrateful stepdame, the Athens,—that city, which, if one would be silly enough to believe her, is the model, the encourager, and the rewarder, of all taste, would not do for him, what England, even in her worst and most worthless times, did for the poets whom she starved,—she would not give him a monument,—no, not so much as an unhewn stone, to let it be known that one grave in the Canon-gate church-yard contained holier dust than that of a baron bailie.

Even when the immortal Burns came, to shame a selfish, undiscriminating, and ungrateful land, the Athens made not the slightest attempt to wash out the foul stain which she had given herself in the case of Ferguson. Burns put her in mind of that stain, not only by the erection of the little tombstone over his unfortunate brother; but in a monument more durable,—a poem, which, had there been any soul within the cold ribs of the Athens, would have harrowed it with remorse, that might have been a stimulus to repentance. But the Athens took it all with that sang-froid

which is the concomitant and the characteristic of reckless and self-sufficient dulness; and no where in the whole history of literature, is there an instance of neglect more mean, and ingratitude more disgraceful, than that of the Athens, for Robert Burns. She lured him, by fair promises, within her siren and seductive walls. Day after day, and week after week, she dipt him deeper in that dissipation, of which she knows better how to set the example than any city between Kent and Caithness. She showed him about, from tavern to tavern, from one evening party to another, and through every one of her hundred scenes and sinks of vice; and this precious work she continued, till the prospects which he had left behind were blasted, and his own powers and habits spoiled; and the moment she had done this, she had the baseness, not only to drive him helpless back upon the world, but to slander his name for practices which none but herself had taught him.

In a word, when I look at the literary men, whom evil stars have confined to the Athens, or, in any way made to look to her for patronage, I find a few who have succeeded, because it has not been in her power to injure them; and all upon whom she has had power, lost and ruined. Even Jeffrey, if he had not had his fees to bear him out, and if his journal had not been patronised in Lon-

don, might have written his Review in vain; ay, and Scott, who perhaps persevered longer in writing in obscurity than any other author of the present times, would long ere now have been mute or a maniac, had he not possessed some property, held a public office, and been a fierce and forward party-man. Among them all, there has never been an author in the Athens who has lived even decently by literature alone,—as little is there, at this moment, within the whole of her compass, a single person above starvation, who has not some other occupation or emolument, than that of a literary man.

The Edinburgh Review, the only periodical work of any consequence in the Athens which professes to be liberal, and which rests its character upon its merits, and affords a revenue to any body, does not support one literary man in the city, nor is there one Athenian contributor to it, of whom literature is the only or even the chief means of support. Even the Editor, well as it is alleged he is paid for his labour, finds the wrangling of the bar a more lucrative employment, addicts himself more and more to it, and more and more withdraws himself from the Review; while the place of those Athenian writers of the higher class who have died away, without being followed by succes-

sors worthy of them in their avowed professions, are not replaced in the journal by Athenian writers at all, but by mere hacks of London, who have been so long upon the town that nobody sets much store by their lucubrations.

The oldest literary journal in the Athens,—the one which was once named after the whole of Scotland, and which is now named peculiarly after the Athens, is perhaps the one which should be taken as the proper test of her literary powers.

Professing to be of no party in politics, but to set forth the literature of the day in an independent and gentleman-like style, and having the stamp of hoary eld, and the connexion of the foremost bookseller of the Athens to recommend and push it into notice, one would suppose that the Edinburgh Magazine would be elegant in its structure, and extensive in its circulation. But it is neither the one nor the other. When I was in the Athens, the reputed editor was one of those miserable and pretending quacks who can write nothing, and whose taste and opinion are not worth a single straw,—a fellow, who would indeed pretend to an intimacy with the illustrious men both of England and of Scotland, but who never, by any chance, could have been in company with one of them; and who had been appointed to this miserable

editorship, because nobody who could write a single page, or give a sensible opinion upon a single book or subject, could be found, that would have any thing to do with it.

The great success of the Edinburgh Review tempted the cupidity of other booksellers; and, as there was no possibility of contending with it in the same class of writing, or on the same side of politics, a journal of a novel description, not only in the Athens, but in the world generally, was begun. The celebrity of the Review, and the superiority of the Whig advocates, had given a Whig bias, at least as far as speech was concerned, to all the young lawyers of any spirit and pretensions. To so great a degree had this been carried, that even the sons of the most super-ultra devotees to the existing system spoke against sinecures, and hinted that there were such things as the rights of the people. Great alarm was the consequence; because the holders of office found that they would be spoiled of their honours and emoluments through the liberality of their own children. The fear was, no doubt, groundless; for had they taken themselves as a test of patriotism, they would have found that office and emolument are not things of such feeble power. But they were alarmed, and cast about to devise means for reclaiming the wandering boys back to the good old and profitable

path. There was a sort of simultaneous movement on the part of the boys themselves. They had taken up the Whig song, just because it was the popular one at the time; and they had looked for a share of that public approbation and renown, which had for a considerable time been bestowed upon the more illustrious of the Whigs. But they were disappointed: either they had made an undue estimate of their own powers, or the demands already established upon this approbation and renown were as great as it could bear. Considering the quarter whence these unnatural infants of place came, they were probably suspected,—at any rate, they were left for a few years, dancing attendance at the heels of the Whigs, in a neglect more contemptuous and complete than was wise in the one party, or fair toward the other.

This happened just about the time when there was a sort of movement against the Whigs on the part of the Tories, and a sort of movement from them on the part of the people. An appetite was, in short, created, which called for food different from the sapless husk of the Edinburgh Magazine, and the hard and political fare of the Review. Various causes conspired to give body to this appetite; and Blackwood's Magazine was the thing produced. Still the party would not have had courage actually to start that Magazine; for there

was a sort of belief afloat, that anybody, who would venture to publish in the Athens that which was not Whig, would fail, and anybody who would attack the Whigs would be mauled for his pains. The Magazine was started by very plain and unpretending—at any rate, unwarlike Athenian men of letters. They had a misunderstanding with Blackwood; he got rid of them, and the Athens began to taste the racy productions of the Tory press. Even this cannot be reckoned an Athenian production; for England and Ireland had to be ransacked ere contributors could be found, and even yet, Blackwood, with the aid of his brother the twin-bailie, is editor.

When a sufficient number of those who, as was supposed, would not be kept back either by moral or by literary scruples, had been collected together, the campaign was commenced. At first, they seemed to have only two objects in view,—the vilification of all persons who were supposed to be either directly or indirectly connected with the Whigs, more especially with the Edinburgh Review; and a disposition to boast of their own debauchery, immorality, and want of principle, in order to disarm any one who might attack them upon that ground.

Slander, especially if it be levelled against persons whom the vulgar account it boldness to attack,

and couched in careless and indifferent terms, is always sure to please somebody; and, from what I saw and heard, there are no people to whom it is more agreeable than to certain parties in the Athens. Accordingly, those opinions which, for half an age, the people of the Athens had been taught to receive, without so much as questioning their soundness, were turned into burlesque and ribaldry; and those persons to whom they had been accustomed to look up with respect and veneration, were ridiculed and abused. As those opinions and those persons were alike obnoxious to the ruling faction in the Athens—though that faction had never ventured to express its dislike—they received the new style of writing with no common degree of delight and gratitude. Themselves and their cause had been so long and so severely cudgelled and exposed, that they had given up all hopes of having any thing said in their favour. Therefore, they regarded the productions of those, who took up that line of conduct merely because it was the only one in which they had even a chance of success, as hearty and devoted champions; and the writers, finding that they met with more patronage, and patronage which promised to lead to more advantageous results than they had calculated, became more and more decidedly partisans, and waxed more bold and barefaced in their attacks. A coarse and

clumsy imitation of the biblical style, which would have passed unnoticed, but for its local applications, and its gross personality, gave very general offence, and for that reason procured them a notoriety which otherwise they would probably never have obtained; and some cruel insinuations against a venerable personage whom the whole country had looked up to as a model, both of a man and of a philosopher, were believed to give him so much pain, when the decay of nature had all but put an end to a long career of usefulness and celebrity, that they fancied no one was too low or too high for feeling their attacks.

It must be allowed that both novelty and talent were displayed in those productions,—at least in some of them. The style and manner were altogether new: a sort of virgin-soil, as it were, had been turned up for culture; and though by far the greater portion of its produce was weeds, and weeds too of the rankest description, yet they had all the vigour and greenness of a first crop. Periodical writing had for a long time consisted of abstract disquisitions, or tales which had no decided locality, or connexion with individual and existing character; and whatever may have been the practices of the writers, they kept up a regular show of sobriety and morality in their writings. But the writers of Blackwood's Journal not only

seasoned their productions with unsparing personality, but affected to be adepts in debauchery, and pretended to keep no secrets from their readers, even in the most unseemly of their carousals. Having manufactured ideal names and characters for themselves, they treated these in the most unceremonious manner; and this, in some measure, took off the edge of that indignation which otherwise would have been felt at their treatment of real characters. More than any thing, they succeeded; and success is generally received as the test not only of ability, but of a good cause, in literature as well as in war. If Blackwood's Magazine had never got into considerable circulation, the writers in it would have been regarded as miserable and malicious rebels from the honest cause of literature; but as they were in so far successful, they obtained in some degree the renown of heroes.

Among those writers there were, unquestionably, some of talents far superior to what may be supposed the average of those who contribute to ordinary magazines; and though these for a time took part in the ribald practices of the publication, and were pleased for a season with that eclât which such practices are supposed to afford; yet still, new in what might be considered as the most blamable perversions of their talents, there were gleams of a better spirit, and promises that they could not

always follow the same course. That some of the best of them have already done so is apparent, from the altered spirit of the later numbers, in which there is an attempt at the same external appearance, but a visible paucity in spirit; and the probability is that, ere long, Blackwood's Magazine, which has always had a considerable portion of its articles from London, will gradually derive its supplies more and more from that quarter, or dwindle to the same inanity as its monthly brother of the Athens.

Indeed, the whole tenour of Blackwood is of a description which cannot be permanent. It offers no principle upon which the mind of an unprejudiced and independent man can dwell at the time, and as little to which any body can refer afterwards for the purpose of obtaining information. Personality, if bold, daring,—or, to use one of its own terms, *blackguard* enough, is sure to make a noise at the time; but its interest is short in proportion to its intensity. For the philosophic discussion of any one subject, for the establishing of any one principle in science, in morals, or in politics, or for any one addition to the stock of human information, it is in vain to look back at the book; and though people talk about it (and they talk less and less about every successive number,) at the period of its appearance, it may be supposed to pass of

necessity into the same speedy oblivion as the animosities or whims by which it was produced; and that future men will have no more desire to know how written slander was managed in the days of Blackwood, than they have at present to know in what terms the ladies of Billingsgate rated each other when the Tower of London was a seat of royalty.

Some may indeed suppose, that as this species of writing is not kept back by any inflexibility of principle from bending round all the sinuosities, and accommodating itself to all the crooked paths of corruption, it will continue to find enough of support from the official men of the Athens, and their coadjutors and underlings throughout Scotland; this, however, is by no means the case. Those persons have no love for literature of any description: their deeds are such as will not bear any kind of light, and the whole of their hopes are centred in the one circumstance of the public's being kept in ignorance of what they are doing. Like criminals under trial, their only chance is in an attempt to shake the credibility of the witnesses against them; and if they attempt a direct defence of themselves, it is sure to render their offences more palpable, and their condemnation more certain. So long as public opinion remains, and the whole appearances of the times give promise that it

will continue to gather strength rather than to decay—it is a tribunal to which none but those who have a wish to stand well with the public will be disposed to appeal; and therefore, how much soever the official men of the Athens may have been gratified by the attempts which the writers in Blackwood have made to traduce their political opponents, and turn them into ridicule, there is nothing at which they would be so much alarmed, or indeed have so much cause to be alarmed, as an attempt at their own justification, even in the same pages. As long as such writers as those in Blackwood confine themselves to personal attacks in the offensive way, so long will they not be dreaded or disliked by that party of which they endeavour to hold themselves out as the champions; but the moment that they depart from this offensive mode of personal warfare, and take a single position upon the real ground in dispute, from that moment the whole of their batteries, whether they will or not, must be turned against those whom they affect to defend. Thus, though they may have been useful in effecting a momentary distraction of public attention, they neither have, nor can they overturn a single principle of those against whom their ribaldry is directed, nor establish one for those whom they call their friends.

There is another thing against their permanence.

Men, whether official or not, are never fond of having that brought prominently forward in which themselves do not excel. Now if one were to pitch upon the very weakest point—the blank as it were in the official men of Scotland, and of the Athens, that upon which one would pitch would be literature. The civic part of them, from their education, their associates, and the whole tenour of their lives, can neither love a book, nor, indeed, know any thing about it; and if the opposition and liberal men of the Athens, who after all are by very much the majority, are utterly unable or unwilling to support even one literary man, it is not to be supposed that the other party, who are fewer in number, and ever fearful of exposure, can have more ability or more disposition. No doubt, such of the writers for Blackwood as know the extreme barrenness of the ruling men in the Athens, in all matters of taste and information, and the more fond and forcible predilection which they have for dining in taverns and carousing in ale-houses, and who have marked that those ears which are deaf as their kindred clay to every voice of elegance or of criticism, are open as their mouths for dinner, or their hands for a bribe, when grossness usurps the place of taste, and ribaldry comes in the stead of science,—no doubt those writers have risked a hope in supplying husks for the Athenian swine;

but though the deeds have been immoral, the remembrance of them will not be immortal; and though there may always be a few that, seeking their chief pleasure, and finding their only renown in their own debauchery, are pleased to see deeds worthless as their own,

> " Register'd to fame eternal,
> In deathless pages of diurnal;"

Yet even this would not have succeeded with the public generally, at any period, and it perhaps could have had less chance at no period than it has at present, when the rapid spread of intercourse and information is, in spite of all official and other efforts to the contrary, diffusing a more rational taste even down to the very humblest classes of society. Men in office, however inferior and second-rate that office may be, and however mean may be their own tastes, and grovelling their own habits, will not—dare not, continue long to pride themselves in, or even privately to encourage, that from which the peasantry turn away in disgust; and, ere many additional years have been added to the Kalendar, it will be found that those superior spirits who lent themselves to this work for a time, in the hope that it would serve them as a stepping-stone for getting into office, will become ashamed of it in consequence of having obtained

their objects, or disgusted, because that which they must have felt as a degradation, has to them, also, proved a deception.

But, whatever of good or of evil, of liveliness or of licentiousness, of the misapplication of talent or the miserable labour of that which is no talent at all, may be found in the school of writing, of which Blackwood's Magazine hitherto forms the chief specimen, the Athens assuredly has neither the merit nor the demerit of originating that school; and if all support except what the Athens could give it, were to be withdrawn, the remainder of its existence would not exceed one month.

Having heard a great deal about the intellectuality of the Athens, and its superiority in genius, in taste, and in literature, above every other city in the world, I made a point of examining, with all the care and candour that I could exercise. I began too, with a strong, yes, a very strong prejudice in its favour; for it had been rung again and again in my ears, that, compared with what was to be found here, the whole world beside was an empire of dulness. But my fond, and as it proved to be my foolish prejudice, became less and less, at every step; and, whether I would or not, I was compelled to see, that the greater part of the name which somehow or other the Athens has gotten,

has been gotten through the unceasing brazen-frontedness of her own self-idolatry. In various parts of the Athens, I found men *pirouetting* in small evolutions of what they call philosophy. One, for instance, worshipping the wings of a butterfly; and another drawing lines and circles upon a human skull, and measuring the talents and propensities of the unknown owner very gravely with a pair of compasses and scale; a third, taking up the visions of Robert Owen of New Lanark, was bewildering himself in an attempt so to arrange the human race, as that the square of the oblique diagonal of conduct should be equal to the two squares of the base of nature, and the perpendicular of education; a fourth was proving by coal and limestone, that the globe had been boiled; and a fifth, by porphyry and basalt, that it had been roasted. One learned professor, the very apex of the triangle of the Athenian science,—who, in his time, has tested hell, as it were—has, in the ardour of his inquiries after and into things hot and cold, alternately deputed his

> ——————"delighted spirit
> To bathe in fiery floods, or to reside
> In thrilling regions of the thick-ribb'd ice,"—

was reported to me, (for I did not *then* see him,) not exactly

"To be imprisoned in the viewless wind,
And blown with restless violence round about
The pendent world,"

but to have made one of the most singular experiments upon the said winds themselves, that ever entered into a philosophic head. This learned personage, whom the Athenian magistrates had at one time refused to expel from the city "*cum avisamento eorum ministrorum*," upon the alleged ground of his being a conjuror, had made long and laborious experiments in all sorts of heating and cooling, physical and metaphysical. When other matters and fires were nearly exhausted with him, it struck him that it would excite mortal wonder, and win immortal renown, if he could bring atmospheric air to a red heat. He foresaw, that if he should succeed in this experiment, it would be farewell to both gas and steam; and there would be no need of dangerous boilers, cast-iron pipes, smoking chimneys, and all the other casualties of the new power and the new light. If this degree of temperature could be communicated to the atmosphere, the fondest dreams of mankind would be realized,—the midnight air might be rendered more glorious than the sun; winter might be driven within the polar circle; the precinct of the Holyrood might be made fragrant

with spices, and fat with olives; and the vine might clothe the now naked crags, green with never-fading leaves, and purple with perennial grapes. That which promised so many and so delightful advantages was worth trying, and so the philosophic personage is reported to have gone about his experiment in this wise:—

He procured a bagpipe; and having dissected away the chanter, the drones, and the bellows, —making the stumps secure with ligatures, he carried the inflated bag to a neighbouring barn, and set two brawny peasants a-threshing it with their flails, while he stood by, wishing and wondering as to the result. What that result was, I was unable to learn, and indeed I made not much inquiry respecting it,—and I mention it only as one of the many instances in which I heard the Athenians boast of their philosophy.

But if they have no literary men, as such, of whom they can boast, they have about as little title to put on airs about their literary taste. In that, as well as in all other matters, they are idolaters; and it may be truly said of them, as was said of the people of the elder Athens, that the most conspicuous of their altars is "to the Unknown God." So long as Jeffrey was deemed infallible, they ventured no opinion upon any point, until they knew how he had delivered him-

self. When, for instance, he had, as he thought, blasted the laurels of Byron in the bud, the cry that ran through the Athens was, "What a silly fool to attempt to write poetry? But the Review has done his business. *He* will write no more at any rate." When the retribution of the "Scotch Reviewers" was hurled back, the worshippers of the Athens were astonished, but they said nothing. The fact is, that they neither have opinions of their own in such matters, nor have they leisure to form them.

The observations which I had occasion to make respecting the dramatic taste of the Athenians are equally applicable to their taste, not only in literature, but in every thing else. In youth their education is too superficial, and when they grow up, the drudgery of the law, to which so many of them are doomed, and which influences the habits of the whole, together with that dissipation in which they indulge as habitually and more deeply than any people with whom I am acquainted, give a turn to their minds which is the very opposite of literary. These causes will be more fully developed in the following chapter; but there is one fact which is very remarkable, which the Athenians themselves may as well be left to explain. Of the men who, from time to time, have become illustrious in the Athens for their scientific or literary attainments, hardly one has been

born, and very few have been educated, within her walls. They have almost uniformly been provincial Scotchmen, and not a few of them have been students at the provincial universities. So that while the Athens has not much to boast of in the literary way, the little of which she can boast is not wholly her own. Perhaps this is another of the desolations of the widowed metropolis.

CHAPTER IX.

EDUCATION OF THE ATHENS.

Just as the twig is bent the tree's inclined.—POPE.

If there be one cause to which, more than others, we are to look for an explanation of those peculiarities that distinguish the inhabitants of one place from the inhabitants of others, that cause is education. I do not mean that education which is given, or attempted to be given, at schools and colleges, but that which is produced by the contact and collision of those with whom young men associate at that important period when they are beginning to think and to act for themselves. There is no doubt that more of the character of society in the Athens depends upon this circumstance than upon any thing else, as, so far as my observation extended, there is more peculiarity in the treatment of the Athenian youth at this period than in any other city of the British empire.

It is to this education, for life and not for literature, which I mean chiefly to advert to in this

chapter. Still, it may not be amiss to give a preliminary glance at the school education, not of the Athens merely, but of Scotland generally, because on that, it strikes me, Englishmen might find something both to learn and to imitate. The idea of having one or more schools in each parish, so established that no teacher can be appointed to them who is not well educated, and so endowed that they can never be corrupted as the free-schools so frequently are in England, or confined to the most opulent classes of society, as the better class of schools are in that country, is one of the best that ever entered into the imagination of any legislature. Even in the remotest and most thinly-inhabited parish of Scotland, the schoolmaster is a man of real information: not unfrequently the son of humble parents, who, finding that he evinced talents and a taste for learning, sent him to school, and to some one or other of those cheap universities in Scotland, where judging from the number of illustrious names that they can boast of, learning is nothing the worse for its cheapness, till he was qualified for orders; but who finding his influence insufficient for procuring him the ease and indolence of a parsonage, took, as his only alternative, the humbler and more laborious, but unquestionably more useful, office of parish schoolmaster. Young men of this description are one of the greatest blessings that a country can pos-

sess, and rather than that Scotland should lose them it were more for her welfare that all the boasted philosophy, and all the brawling law of the Athens were at the bottom of the sea. They may be said not only to pursue learning for its own sake, and without any view either to honour or emolument, but also to follow the profession of teachers from the same disinterested motives. Since professions more lofty and lucrative than that of minister of the Scotch Kirk monopolized the sons of the wealthier Scotch—since the free sons of the mountains went to practise slavery in the west, and those of the plains to get wealth and liver-complaints in the east, the ecclesiastical offices in Scotland have been almost exclusively filled by the sons of the poor. These almost invariably pass a part of their early life either as parochial schoolmasters, or as tutors in private families. The tutors are those who have the best connexion, the most ambition, and the most fawning and obsequious habits. They are menial servants, and with the education of gentlemen they are sent to companion with butlers and valets, to humour the caprices of wayward children, and to bear the fooleries of booby "lairds," and the scorn of assuming dames, who can see no merit but in being connected with this, that, or the other family, which has borne the same name, and inhabited the same lands since the first introduction of crows and

cow-stealing. Connected with this office, at least in the majority of instances, there are humiliations to which no lad of spirit would submit for the sake of the present emolument. The hope, and generally the stipulation, of the tutor is, that his patron shall, when he has drudged and degraded himself for the requisite number of years, "bless him with a kirk;" and this abasement,—this bowing down before the patron, in order that they may, in due time, rise to the living, is one of the chief reasons why the Scotch parsons have swerved from that independence of feeling and of action, of which the example was set them by John Knox, and become as willing and obsequious worshippers at the feet even of delegated power, or of unmerited place as imagination can picture to itself. If it were not, that they are strained through this filter, we should never have had them declaring, ex cathedrâ, that the National Monument, a piece of gratuitous foolery, or vanity, or political patchwork, was "a most suitable and appropriate expression of gratitude to the Lord of Hosts." If they had not been studying somewhere else than in their bibles, their answer would have been—

"The Being, whom we profess to worship, and under whose protection we certainly are, cannot be propitiated by votive offerings of stone and lime; and the gallant deeds of our brave countrymen,

however gracefully they might be chiselled on the frieze of the 'restored Parthenon,' could not, in the slightest degree, redound to his glory, although they might, to a certain extent, flatter the vanity of men. The offerings which He requires are not swelling columns and fretted architraves: they are *deeds*—deeds of justice, beneficence, and mercy, done to our fellow men. After He has enumerated the most costly and splendid sacrifices—just for the purpose of declaring that in his sight they avail nothing—He delivers this simple but heavenly commandment, 'Offer to God *thanksgiving*.' To propose the erection of *any edifice*, therefore, as 'a most suitable and appropriate expression of gratitude to the Lord of Hosts,' savours little of the knowledge and still less of the spirit of Christianity; and if no edifice whatever could be such an expression, far less could a temple which had been erected for the worship of dead and useless idols."

The filtration, or winnowing, or whatever process it may be called, which has separated and set apart the more flexible portion of the educated peasantry of Scotland for the peculiar service of the kirk, has been in an eminent degree favourable for the schools, which have thus reserved to them the most independent and generally also the most enusiastically devoted to learning.

I should have mentioned ere now, that the men

who fill learned situations, or are engaged in literary pursuits in Scotland, ought, in genius, though perhaps not always in education, to be superior to men of the same description in England; for the expense of obtaining any thing like a literary education in the latter country is so great, and the disposition to obtain it is so contrary to the habits of the humbler, and even the middle ranks of the people, that the range of classes from whom the learned men of England can be taken, is far narrower than that from which Scotland can make her election. In England, a peasant or a small farmer never so much as dreams of giving his son a classical or a university education; and even among the wealthier yeomen and tradesmen this is seldom done, except with an immediate view to a church living, to which if the person so educated should not succeed, he returns back to the counter or the counting-house.

In Scotland, again, though the gates, at least of some species of knowledge, do not stand open so widely or so long as in England, yet they stand open to every class of the people; and thus, though the population of Scotland be not one-sixth part of that of England, the number of persons from whom the learned men of Scotland are chosen is perhaps greater; indeed, it is positively greater, for the whole two millions of the Scotch people are in this situation; and if all the classes in England who have

the power and the will to educate their children be counted, they will be found far fewer than this. Now, as the means of obtaining liberal education descend in society, the quantity of talent must necessarily increase. In natural ability, a hundred peasants, at least a hundred peasant-boys, are not necessarily inferior to the same number of scions of nobility; and as the total number of peasants exceeds the total numbers of the others, the whole quantity of natural capacity must be greater. Whatever, indeed, may be their differences after they grow up, and when all the varieties of advantage, opportunity, and habit have come into play, it cannot be denied that there is a point in the age of all classes of society at which their talents and capacities are in the precise ratio of their numbers; and it is equally true that, if they were all taken at this point, and subjected to the same discipline, the number of illustrious men that would be obtained from each class would also be in the precise ratio of the total number. But all classes in Scotland have, from infancy up to a certain period, the same acilities of being educated, and therefore, in obtaining a supply of learned and literary men, Scotland has the choice of the whole population.

But this is not the only advantage that results from throwing the gates of knowledge open to all the people, for those of the poorer classes who are sent

to college have a chance of possessing greater natural abilities, and being more assiduous and successful in the cultivation of them, than those who are sent from the rich.

This may, at first sight, appear to be paradoxical, but its truth will become apparent upon very little reflection. The more seductive pleasures of youth to which the rich have access, are, independently of any other cause, sufficient to turn the scale in favour of the poor. To the rich, the hours spent in the prosecution of knowledge are hours taken from the enjoyment of pleasure, and as such they must ever be looked upon as a task and a drudgery. To the poor, on the other hand, the hours spent in the prosecution of knowledge are an abridgment of labour more irksome and severe, and therefore they must ever be regarded as relaxation and pleasure. Besides, the children of the rich are sent to college, not so much with a view to the perfection of education in the meantime, and the profitable application of it afterwards, as because it is the custom, or that their parents and guardians can afford the expense. The pupil who is born to wealth or to honours, considers his literary attainments not only as a merely subordinate accomplishment, but as one which stands in the way of others that he deems more consistent with his rank, and feels to be more consonant with his desires; while he to whom the same pursuit is

present pleasure, and the hoped foundation of future honour and emolument, is certain not only to like it better, but to pursue it with more zeal and success. Of the illustrious names that have been famed in the pages of Scotch biography, a far greater proportion have sprung from humble life than are to be found in the annals of any other country. The fact is, that although the Scotch peasants have a strong desire to educate all their children, it is only the ones who are believed or found to possess a superior degree of genius that are educated for literature; and of the discoveries of original genius that are continually making in the provincial parts of Scotland a very curious book might be made. I shall mention one instance of the many :—

The gentleman, who at this moment takes the highest station among the philosophers of the Athens and who would have been entitled to no mean place even when her philosophy was in the zenith of its splendour, is of humble though highly respectable extraction. His father rented a small farm in the kingdom of Fife, and had it not been that accident revealed the genius of the infant philosopher, first to the village parson, next through his advice to learned professors of St. Andrew's, and, lastly, through the wisdom of that advice, to the world at large, his experiments might have been confined to composts for the fields, instead of compositions for

the furtherance of science; and his speculations, instead of grasping the globes of the earth and the heavens, might never have soared above a globe-turnip. That the loss that science would thus have sustained would have been great, even the enemies of the philosopher (and there is no philosopher without enemies, especially in the Athens) must allow; for the lines of his discovery have not only been boldly drawn, but have been drawn in situations which no other philosopher has attempted. If, therefore, the discovery which I am about to relate, singular as those who are not conversant with the modes in which genius, when left to itself, developes itself, may consider it to be, had not been made, a blank page would have remained in the book of knowledge, which is now full and fair in its characters of wisdom. The future philosopher, as was once the case with nearly all the nascent philosophers of Scotland, and may still be the case with a few, not the worst of them, divided the year between the study of learning, and the observation of nature. When winter had spoiled the fields of their beauty, and driven the shepherds and cow-herds into the villages, he went to school, where the Proverbs of Solomon, Ruddiman's Rudiments of the Latin Tongue, and Dilworth's Arithmetic, by turns expanded his wisdom, or perplexed his ingenuity; and when the fields were again in flower and the

birds in song, he was sent forth to observe the progress of vegetable and animal life, notice the revolutions of suns, and feel the practical philosophy of wind and rain. In order that there might be economy as well as information in his employment during the latter season, he was enjoined to attend to the movements of his father's cows, as well as to those of nature; and until he had reached nearly the end of his twelfth year, it remained doubtful whether cattle or causation was to be the future business and glory of his life. In the summer of that year, however, the die was cast, and never was turning-up more philosophically fortunate, or more fortunate for philosophy. In one of those village libraries, which often contained more rich variety of lore than is to be found among the countless volumes of even an Athenian repository of books, he had found a thumbed and boardless copy of Simpson's Euclid, which might in its time have perplexed the wits of ten successive classes at St. Andrew's. By that strong intuition which ever characterizes superior genius, even at its earliest dawn, he found out that this was a volume worthy of being read, and throwing aside the Shorter Catechism of the Kirk, which had been furnished him by his parents for his recreation, as well as the exploits of George Buchanan, the History of Buckhaven, the exquisite biography of Paddy from Cork, and the sweet

songs of Sir James the Rose, and the Laird of Coull's Ghost, with which he had contrived to furnish himself, he set fondly and furiously to work upon Simpson's Euclid, preparing his floor, and drawing his diagrams in the same manner, though not exactly in the same materials, as the philosophers of antiquity. The smooth grassy sod answered all the purposes of the abacus, and the cows generously supplied him in a substitute for the sand. Spreading and smoothing that substitute with his bear foot, he engraved upon it with his finger the mystic lines and letters; and, with book in hand, proceeded to establish the elementary principles of geometry, heedless though the cows should, in the mean time, scale the fence, and carry the neighbouring corn by a *coupe de la bouche*.

One day as he was occupied in this learned work, the parson of the village happened to be on the other side of the hedge, pacing backwards and forwards, and cudgelling his reluctant and retentive brains for as much of the raw material of sermonizing as would serve to put him and his parishioners over the ensuing Sunday. While he paced and pleaded with the sluggish spirit, his ear was assailed by a continued *mumbling* of voice through the hedge, which caught so much stronger a hold of him than he could do of his sermon, that his steps and his study were both brought to a dead stand,

and his outward ears perked up in the fondest attitude of listening. Ministers, as well as men, often remember the words of that of which they were never able to grapple with the meaning; and thus, though the old parson did not exactly comprehend the extent of that proposition, the diagram of which the young philosopher had traced upon his soft abacus, and the demonstration of which he was rehearsing in very solemn tones, yet he remembered that such words had been used by one of the professors in that part of his academic course which he had never understood. That which is known is always simple, and that which is not known, however simple it may be in itself, is always accounted the very depth of wisdom. The parson was astonished, and, for a moment, he doubted the evidence of those ears upon which he had had to depend through a long life. He tried the one, it caught, "The angles at the base of an isosceles triangle;" he tried the other, it continued the enunciation, "are equal to one another." He poked his head half way through the hedge, and the auxiliary testimony of his eyes and spectacles confirmed that of his ears. He saw the abacus, the book, and the student, and forthwith descended to the village, big and puffing with the tale. A visit from the parson at any other hour than that of dinner, is always an ominous matter to some of the family of a Scotch

peasant. If the young folks be children they dread the catechism. If more advanced, there are occasional terrors of that Scotch tread-mill, which is trodden alone and in presence of the assembled congregation. The mother of the philosopher had nothing to dread upon either of those grounds, but still she felt all the glow of a woman's curiosity, when the parson approached her husband with so hasty steps and so important looks.

"Well, Mr. Lascelles," said the parson, "you must take care of Jock, and that forthwith, for I am thinking that he is a *genus*."

"I am very sorry to hear it, Sir," replied Mr. Lascelles, lifting his bonnet, "but he is very young, and will get steadier as he grows up. Has he been letting the cows eat your corn?"

"The Lord forbid either the one thing or the other," said the parson. "He is a genus, a mathematical genus, and will be an honour to the parish when we are both dead and gone."

The father now understood that the words which he had at first considered as lamentation were laudatory; the fatted calf was killed, the parson was feasted, the boy taken from the cows, and sent to college; and the result is—a perfect Anak in philosophy.——

That the literary men of Scotland are drawn from the whole range of the population is not only

in favour of themselves; it is also highly advantageous to the humbler classes of the people. In as far, indeed, as merely literary men are concerned, the advantage to Scotland is by no means great, because in Scotland they meet with but little reward to stimulate their exertions. And hence they are obliged to scatter themselves over the world. But still, the number that remain, and fill the duties of parochial and other teachers throughout the country, are superior, not in degree merely, but absolutely in kind, to the teachers of youth, more especially youth of the poorer classes, in any other part of the country. In England, for instance, when a man of general information undertakes the office of teacher, he does it either with the hope of making a fortune by teaching the children of the rich, or as a matter of necessity, and as a dernier resort after having been unfortunate in teaching the children of the poor. But one who is to have any chance of succeeding in the communication of any thing else than the mere mechanism of reading, writing, and casting accounts, which after all does not deserve the name of education, must love his profession for its own sake, and look upon the exercise of it as an honour,—which, in one that instructs the children of the lower orders, can never be the case, unless he himself has been educated as one of those orders. It is quite natural, and it

is also quite true, that the education which is most beneficial for any one class of the society, can neither be imparted nor purchased by any other class. Charity-schools will never be held in much estimation by any one who has seen the progress of those poor children for whose education their own parents pay. There is something in the receiving of any kind of charity which is humiliating and debasing; and to bestow a charitable education upon the whole or the greater part of the labouring classes in the country, would be the surest means not only of leaving them nearly uneducated, but of destroying their virtue and diminishing their usefulness.

It is to the absence of this humiliating mode of being instructed, and the presence of one infinitely better and more rational, that the grand peculiarity of the Athens, and remarkably of the provincial parts of Scotland, is chiefly to be attributed. The smallness of Scotch and even of Athenian society, the limited number even of the labouring classes, who, except in Glasgow, and perhaps a place or two more, are all intimately known, as well in their connexions as in their individual characters, and perhaps also the low rate of wages, and the fewer facilities to solitary dissipation, may no doubt account for some portion of the intelligence and virtue of the humbler Scotch. But still, in as far as those circumstances operate, they must operate

upon the higher classes as well as the lower; and, as the higher classes in Scotland have no such superiority over the higher classes in other countries, as the lower have over the lower, there must be some special cause which operates in favour of the Scotch peasantry. I have looked round for causes; I have found none except those remarkable advantages in respect of teachers of education, (unless, perhaps, it be that the sober and simple Kirk of Scotland has a more wholesome influence upon the poor than a more showy and aristocratical establishment can exert,) and I think I discovered that those advantages are quite sufficient to account for the fact.

If there were not something in education that made strongly and peculiarly in favour of the Scotch peasantry, why should they be decidedly before the peasantry of England, both in talent and civilization, while not merely the upper ranks of the provincial Scotch, but even the learned and official scribes (and pharisees) of the Athens, are so markedly and so monstrously behind? This circumstance, unaccustomed as kings may well be supposed to be to rigorous philosophic observation, did not escape the notice of George the Fourth. He expressed no unusual admiration at the polish of the Scotch peers, the elegance of the Scotch ladies, the learning of the Scotch professors and

parsons, or the worshipful appearance of the Scotch magistrates; but the Scotch people, the crowds who shouted his welcome on his arrival, and who cheered him every time he appeared in public, were a source of wonder and a theme for admiration,—and a proof, against which there is no arguing, that if people receive the education of gentlemen, their habits will correspond, however scanty their earnings or scanty their abodes.

In the Athens, this relative superiority of the humbler classes over those whom chance, ancestry, or office, has set up into the high places, is not only more remarkable than in any other locality that I ever visited, but the most remarkable, at least the most admirable feature in the character of the Athens herself.

I have said, and I dare themselves to deny it, that her men in office are a trifling and a truckling race; I have said, and I dare themselves to deny it, that a great mass of her scribes unite some of the worst propensities of the Jew, with none of the best of the attorney; I have said, and I dare them to deny it, that her schools of philosophy have "fallen into the sear and yellow leaf," and that her philosophical societies pursue trifles from which even school-boys would turn with disdain; and I have said, that her *gentry* have neither the capacity nor the means of encouraging the sciences, literature,

and the fine arts; but though I have said thus, and said it from personal—perhaps painful, observation, I am bound to add, that in point of intellect, and all matters considered in point of conduct, the populace of the Athens are far superior to any with which I am acquainted. When I visited the public libraries, the men whom I found borrowing the classical and philosophical books wore aprons, while the occasional lady or gentlemen that I saw there, was satisfied with the romance of the week, or the pamphlet of the day.

This accumulation of intellect among the lower and labouring classes is a delightful thing,—when contemplated as studying history or philosophy, or sporting itself with the finest productions of genius. In this calmness and tranquillity it puts one in mind of the blue expanse of the interminable and unfathomable ocean; its immensity makes you feel it sublime; its depth tints it with that transparent green which the eye never wearies in contemplating, —but, when the wind is up, when the billows heave their masses, dash their spray to the heavens, and deafen the ends of the earth with their roar, the ocean becomes a fearful and a formidable thing; and, when the winds of oppression chafe it, so is a population so learned, and so linked together, as the labouring classes of the Athens.

In the great manufacturing or commercial towns

of England, and even, and perhaps to fully as great a degree, in the British metropolis, one finds the labourers and operative mechanics, though strong enough at their labour, and skilful enough at their craft, far down indeed in the intellectual scale,—reduced from their want of emulation to seek their relaxation and their pleasure in the indulgence of their merely animal appetites, and forced, through the want of proper education at the outset, and fit means of obtaining or extending it afterwards, to spend their evenings in ale-houses, and rest their distinctions of honour and superiority on brawls and fights. In Scotland generally, and in the Athens in particular, it is very different. Almost the whole of the working classes there have got such an education in their youth as not only would qualify them for ultimately being masters in their respective trades, but which gives them an insatiable thirst, not for technical knowledge in their own professions merely, but for knowledge in general. If one were to follow them home, after the hours of their labour are over, one would not find them besotting themselves with beer, and discussing the circumstances of a prize-fight, in clouds of smoke over a dirty newspaper, which the reader has to spell as he gets on. No doubt they have their carousals, and when they do drink, they drink deeply; but it is not so much for the love of the

dissipation, as for some public or brotherly measure which brings them together. You find one man laying aside his apron to consult Adam Smith, dispute with Malthus, or re-judge the judges of the Edinburgh Review; another will be found solving mathematical problems, or constructing architectural plans; and all the less proficient will be found attending evening classes, at which they are instructed by able teachers, and for reasonable fees.

Society is indeed, as it were, reversed in the Athens; the men of the law give their evenings to Bacchus; those who are called philosophers, give theirs to butterflies; the ladies associate for the purposes of gossipping; and the gentlemen, with praiseworthy gallantry, assist the ladies; while the artisans pursue literature, and study philosophy. Thus, although there be more both of the one and the other in the Athens, than one would at first sight suppose, the supposition is excusable because they are not to be found where one would first and most naturally seek for them.

But if these habits make the labouring classes in the Athens more intelligent and delightful as a people than the same classes are in England, they render them as much more dangerous as a mob. It is true, that any demagogue cannot lead them to any mischief for any cause that he pleases, as is but too often the case with a less informed and re-

flective population. But if they are not to be collected or set on by every casual breath, it is not every casual breath that will make them disperse, or make them desist from their purpose. They have repeatedly—indeed upon every occasion where they have been aroused and brought together, evinced an union and organization which, with arms and perseverance, would have made them formidable to a large military force; and they have kept their plans so secret, and executed their purposes with so much promptitude and skill, that the whole of the legal and local authorities, in the joint exercise of their wisdom and their fears, have not been enabled to penetrate the one or prevent the other. "The Porteus" mob is universally known; and a gentleman who was an eye-witness gave me such an account of a minor one, both in its object and in its mischief, that occurred upon the result of the late Queen Caroline's trial, as convinced me that their skill and their spirit have not yet abated.

The populace of the Athens, as well as of most other places, resolved upon having a general illumination, when the result of that trial was made known. I do not say this was right, neither do I say that it was wrong; but it was the will and the wish of the people, and they did it. The official part of the Athenians were of course against the measure, on political grounds; and a very large proportion of

the superior classes disliked it, either because they had doubts of its propriety, or because they disliked the expense and trouble. Disturbances were apprehended, and the authorities took what they were pleased to call "vigorous measures:" they gave plenary power to Archy Campbell,—armed deacon Knox with a great bludgeon,—supported the constabulary with staves,—hung bayonets and cartouch-boxes across the shoulders of the writers' clerks,—stuck swords behind the sheriff and advocates-depute,—sent for the Lothian farmers and their cart-horses,—collected the military detachments,—shotted the guns of the Castle, and lighted the linstocks,—dined, and put in the internal armour of divers bottles of wine a-stomach,—and then bolting as many doors upon themselves as ever they could, sat down to wonder and wait for the issue. After preparations so extensive in their nature, and so profound in their organization, one would naturally have supposed that not so much as a rebellious candle would have been lighted, or an Athenian lamp broken. But this was by no means the case.

My informant, who had just arrived from Glasgow, where a similar scene had been performed on the preceding evening, with much credit to the military, some little to the magistrates, and no positive disgrace to the people, was induced, by

the unusual radiance that he observed in the street, to walk out and see what was the matter, or rather how the matter was. He passed along Princes Street, which exhibited nearly the same number of candles, and the same taste in transparent paintings that are usual upon other grease-burning and gauze-daubing occasions; but the street itself was unusually quiet, and free of people. As he stood gazing at a window opposite the earthen mound, in the decoration of which some painter had been peculiarly happy in absurdity, a stranger took him by the arm, and requested him to go to the other side of the street, as where he stood he was by no means safe. He hesitated, alleging that he heard nothing. "But it is coming," said the stranger, "and the more silent it is the less safe." They crossed the street together; and my informant looking towards the other end of the mound, observed that the lamps were extinguished one by one, and though not a tongue was heard, there was a heavy and hurried tread as of a dense crowd rapidly approaching. It came, filling the whole breadth, and about half the length of the mound. In the front were borne two transparencies, rendered barely visible by dull blue lights behind. On each flank were treble lines of men, armed with stakes, which they had torn from a paling; and the whole square, of which they formed two sides,

was as thick in its composition and as regular and rapid in its march as the Macedonian phalanx. This thick phalanx moved along some of the principal streets: when a voice in one key called out one set of numbers, a shower of missiles instantly demolished every pane in the windows; and when a voice in another key called out another set of numbers, not a stone was thrown. This mass of people passed along the streets, and performed its quantity of mischief with the silence and rapidity of a destroying angel; and when it had wreaked a double portion of violence upon the dwelling of the Lord Provost, it melted away nobody knew how, where, or by what agency. Meanwhile, the alarm had been given to the powers and protectors; but when they came to read the riot act, and scatter the spoilers, there remained none to hear, but shattered houses and frightened inmates, and nothing to scatter, except fragments of glass Fortunately, the mischief was not very great; but the manner in which it was done was enough to show the superior tactics, and consequently superior danger of an Athenian mob.

It is not, however, the education of politicians, of professional men, or of the populace, which constitutes that peculiar course of discipline which deserves to be designated, as "the education of the Athens." That education is a training of the

manners more than of the mind,—an initiation into the practices of life, rather than the principles of any art, or of any science. Most species of education imply some sort of restraint; but the Athenian education is chiefly taken up with removing the restraints that have been imposed in other places, and by other systems; and the rapidity with which students make proficiency in it is without parallel in any of the ordinary schools or colleges. A mere boy shall come from the remotest glen or island of Scotland, as timid as a hare, as modest as a maiden, and as honest as a man of five feet in a mill-stone quarry; and yet, astonishing to tell! three little months, sometimes three little weeks, of Athenian tuition, shall make him a perfect adept in all the theory, and an expert proficient in all the practice, of the Athenian mysteries. No where else, indeed, can young men be thus educated at so early an age; and it is the boast of the Athens, that she frees the youth of Scotland of more of their antiquated notions and narrow prejudices than they could get rid of even in London itself. The number of young men who resort annually to the Athens as students in the college, and under the private lecturers in the different departments of medical science—who, as I have said, are now in a great measure eclipsing and supplanting the college professors, together with

the still greater number who throng to the offices of the men of law, form a separate and unguardianed and unguarded society of youths, greater in proportion to the whole population that is to be found in any other British city. They meet with those of but a year's longer standing, and these meet those of but another year, and so on, till the total take in every lesson-abhorring student, and every quill-driving clerk, to the amount of some thousands,—all of them furnished with at least moderate means of supporting themselves, and without the slightest check or control as to how those means shall be expended. The studies of the law-clerks are of an exceedingly dry description, and those of the other students are not very different. The infant scribes are set loose at an early hour in the evening, and as the professors in the Athens are said to be far more strict in looking after their own fees than after the attendance of the students, the whole of this mass of young persons are left to govern themselves and each other for nearly the half of every day in the week, and almost the whole of Saturday and Sunday. Athenian apprentices to the law are seldom lodged in the families of their masters; and it is a rare thing indeed for an Athenian student to be boarded with his professor. Hence, both classes are allowed to help each other in the formation of their habits,

without any control from the more experienced part of society. It is the interest of the lodging-house-keepers, with whom the greater part of them reside, that their juvenile frolics should not come to the ears of their relations; and therefore each is allowed to indulge himself as he pleases, and the only measure of indulgence is the purse.

While this mode of life holds out facilities for indiscretions which the greater activity and occupation of even a mercantile city prevent, the great numbers take off the shame of individual transactions, and give a fashion and eclât to what would no where else be tolerated. Youth of no great advance in life have their nightly drinking-bouts, and boys, in the first year of their studies or apprenticeships, have their occasional carousals in ale-houses suited to the state of their funds. As the greater number of young men in the Athens, setting aside the working classes, whose conduct is very different, are of this description, perhaps they stamp upon the whole place much of its character; and, especially in the several professions connected with the law, they in all probability stamp the greater part of it.

The results are just what might be expected. There is no place that I visited where both the manners and the morals of young persons are so free; and, with a greater partiality for the bottle,

and a greater proneness to all its consequences, there is perhaps less moral feeling, and a less clear perception either of intellectual or of moral truth, among young men who have passed through the several stages of an Athenian education, than among those who have had their novitiate any where else. Too young for reflection, and too much exposed to temptation, for study, their minds become as desultory as their manners are dissipated; and while yet they hardly know any thing, they are prompt in their decision of every thing; and having once found that it is easier, and gives more notoriety to decide without thinking, than to think without deciding, they become as dogmatical in speech as they are shallow in knowledge, and raw experience.

The force of ardent and inexperienced passions just set loose from paternal restraint, the force of every day's example, the force of ridicule, and frequently also the force of direct compulsion, all conspire to drive every young man who goes to reside in the Athens into these courses, and to keep him in them as long as he continues to reside in the Athens; and be it for study or for business, the novitiate is in ordinary cases sufficiently long to stamp the character for life. Accordingly it has been remarked, that though young men who profited by a regular course of Athenian study, be

often very showy and frequently very jovial as companions, they are not very pre-eminent for sagacity as counsellors, or trust-worthiness as friends. Coming from the provinces in all their greenness, without any principle, save that prudence which their parents tried to inculcate, and getting rid of that very speedily, they are left like blank-paper, upon which the Athens may inscribe her peculiar characters. There they grow up, and acquire the passions, and learn the vices of men, while they have the intellect only of boys.

Every part of the system tends to debauch their morals, and deaden their intellectual perceptions, and there are some parts of it that tend strongly to make them as impertinent as they are ill-informed. With many of them, and more especially with those connected with the law, public speaking, or rather public wrangling, such as they daily hear before their Lordships, is regarded as the foremost and best of all qualifications. Accordingly, they not only have little disputing societies, at which the most profound and grave questions are discussed and decided in the least grave and profound manner, but they also, not sometimes, but very frequently, carry the same practices into their carousing parties, whether in their own lodgings or at their respective ale-houses. Thus they learn to make speeches, which, like inflated bladders, are of a considerable

size, and smooth withal on the surface, but have neither solidity nor weight. Of those who are thus educated, a considerable portion are scattered over the country, and perhaps in this way the Athens draws both upon the virtue and the intelligence of the age, in full for all that she gives in the way of other education. Perhaps, indeed, setting aside the political taints which have been noted as emanating from the Athens, it were just as well for Scotland, and not a bit worse for England, that Athenian education of all kinds were confined between the Loch of Duddingstone and the Water of Leith. Of those again who are thus educated, and who remain in the Athens, it may perhaps be said that they turn round and inflict upon those who come after, full retribution for what those who went before inflicted upon themselves; and that with all her boasted elegance and taste, there is perhaps no city in which vice is more generally or more obtrusively practised, than in this self-boasted model of taste and purity.

The effects of this system of education may be traced in the manners, and especially in the conversation, of the Athenians, even when they have, as one would suppose, risen above the standard and outlived the vices of those juvenile associations. The jokes which are quoted as being the indigenous crop of the Parliament-house habitually, and even

of the bench occasionally, have almost uniformly a latitude in them, which would not be tolerated in similar places elsewhere; and perhaps one of the most offensive collections that could be raked together, would be a list of all the good things with which the Athenians embellish their conversations, as having been said and done by the men of whom they boast; but as such a collection would be relished no where except in the Athens, and with Athenian disciples, it may, with great propriety, be left as a chosen preserve, in which her own literati may poach, when otherwise their stores become exhausted, as must occasionally be the case even with them.

A system of male education, such as I have attempted to describe, must of course require a peculiar system for females; but as female education is every where much more matter of fact than of philosophy, it would be improper to go into any investigation or argument about it. In speaking of such a subject, I might err: by remaining silent, I cannot.

CHAPTER X.

MANNERS AND RELIGION OF THE ATHENS.

"This present world six days they seek,
They seek the next for one day:
They run their scores up all the week,
And sponge them out on Sunday."

Before you can at all characterize the manners of the Athenians, you must have known them long and intimately, and even then it is difficult to be correct. In most things they are so extremely changeful, if not contradictory, that in half the time you would take to describe them in one aspect, they pass into another; and they do so without any cause which you can discover. At one time you would think them all openness and heart, but in a moment they start away, and look exceedingly cold, stiff, and repulsive. They are a hospitable people, certainly, or rather perhaps it is more correct to say that they are entertainment-giving people; but even in the most ostentatious and prolonged of their hospitalities, you always have the impression that they are acting a part—

that there is more show than substance in their courtesies. You feel that you are received with more parade than welcome; and if the sederunt be continued, you find that there is more hilarity than heart. They give you your dinner, and they shun neither the quantity nor the praise of their liquor, but they are not so much disposed to give you your share of the conversation, of which themselves and their city form, not the unvarying, but the inexhaustible subject; and taking for granted that, in consequence of its primary importance and celebrity you, if you know any thing, cannot fail to be acquainted with it even to the minutest particular, they rattle away without ever giving you the least preparation, and if you show, or even hint ignorance of the shufflings of their politics, the cases before their courts, or the tattle of their coteries, the utmost contempt is expressed at you and the most summary vengeance taken for your daring to be ignorant of that which alone is worth knowing.

From the peculiar kind and manner of education which I have noticed, the young men of the Athens are more impertinent and self-sufficient than those of any other place that I have seen. They know not much, and the little that they do know is far from being accurate; but they state their opinions with a forwardness, and support even their ignorance and their errors with a pertinacity at

which you are quite astonished. Perhaps it is this precocity in assertion which renders the Athenians so querulous and dogmatical after they grow up.

As the sums of money which can be afforded to be spent or squandered away in the Athens are not great, there is not much deep playing or costly dissipation in the city. But though the immorality of the Athens costs less than that of a wealthier place, there is not proportionally the less of it upon this account; and though the number of what may be termed gentlemanlike indiscretions be very limited, yet there is perhaps no place of equal proportion which rivals the Athens in low vice. Indeed, the vices of her people are almost all equally low, or if there be any who strive to outdo their fellows, it is by a deeper plunge in downright beastliness.

Among the dashing bloods of the Athens, the squalor of a house is no objection whatever. Scotch economy prompts them to get every thing cheap, and hence there are in the Athens sinks of vice, supported and frequented by those who call themselves gentlemen, that would hardly be tolerated, or even supposed, in the very lowest neighbourhood of any other place. I have been told that nothing can be more shocking either to morality or taste, than the midnight orgies of certain clubs of the Athenian *esprits forts*; and among all ranks of the Athenians —I mean among all the ranks of those who wear

the dress and assume the name of gentlemen,—the practice of drinking is both habitual and deep.

The real state of taste and civilization in any place is perhaps better known from the vices of the inhabitants, than from their virtues; and if the Athens is to be judged by this standard, she has not much of which she can boast, as the broad and vulgar debaucheries of her people, not only occupy much more of their time, but engross much more of their conversation, than is the case in the British metropolis. There is a cause for every thing, and perhaps a reasonable part of the cause of this may be found in that peculiarity of the Athenian education which I noticed in a former chapter. The purity, the ignorance, and the simplicity of the number of young men and boys who are annually added to the mass of the Athens, the novelty of their having all restraint taken off, and the example and encouragement with which they naturally meet, dispose them to proceed to greater lengths in dissipation than if their introduction were more gradual. The limited nature of their finances, too, and the operation of those lessons of thrift and parsimony, which no parents are fonder of inculcating than the Scotch, lead them to cheapness rather than elegance in their pleasures; and the debased and vulgar taste which they thus acquire in their boyhood, clings to them after they are men, and not only

gives the tone to their vices, but in some measure also to their whole character. Accordingly, in no place that I have visited is there more license of conversation, more general freedom from all manner of restraint, and a more total absence of scruples of any kind, than among the scribes of the Athens. Still, to a certain extent, they are pleasant companions; but they are so only to a certain extent. In times not very remote, each of the pleaders before the Supreme Courts in the Athens had his "whiskey-shop," in which he met with clients and solicitors, received fees, and fortified himself in the spirit, for appearing before the "fifteen." Nor were these grave personages themselves prone to forget the lessons which they had learned during their noviciate as students or clerks, and their probation as members of the Faculty of Advocates. Whatever was or is the talents or the connexions of those persons, they were, and among the specimens that remain still are, democrats in their drink. It seems to be an Athenian maxim, that the bottle raises or lowers all people to the same level; and the Athenians still tell with a sort of pride, that when a celebrated Judge, who flourished in the latter half of the eighteenth century, had been missing for three days, and was wanted to aid in the decision of a very important cause, he was at length found upon the top of the steeple of St. Giles', where he had been ca-

rousing and playing at cards with two or three members of that illustrious and accommodating fraternity, the *Caddies*.

Nothing strikes a stranger more than the difference between the business streets and business men of the Athens, and the corresponding streets and men of London, or even of Glasgow. In Bond Street, Oxford Street, or Ludgate Hill, all is bustle and activity,—you cannot stand still, though you would; and within the shop, every one is completely occupied. The Athenian streets, more especially the High Street, present quite another spectacle. At every few yards you find upon the pavement a knot of idlers, concealing their hands in the pockets of their inexpressibles, and alternately settling the affairs of the world, (that is, of the Athens,) and criticising any stranger that passes. Every shop-door too is a sort of rostrum from which the occasional vender of brimstone or blue bonnets, is often found vending Athenian politics to customers of another description; while, almost during the whole morning, bevies of slip-shod damsels stand giggling together at the entrances of the closes, in which innumerable mops and slop-pails are exposed, but not for sale.

Ever since the days of Allan Ramsay, an Athenian bookseller has been a sort of oracle; and, as

the tribe have increased, their oracular powers have become rich and varied. Constable, to whom, by the way, the literary world is as much indebted as to any man living, and who is a remarkable instance of success against the whole current of Athenian prejudice and opposition, has indeed too much sense, as well as too much business, for lounging and lecturing in a public shop; but even Constable is obliged occasionally to submit to the contact of that chaos of philosophic fragments, which, like the atoms of Epicurus, reel and wrangle on the benches by his counter. Blackwood too has a sort of den; but still, when there is nobody in it to gossip, you find his hard face poking out at his shop-door, just as the tongue of a church-bell pokes out at the mouth of that instrument of noise and brass. Manners and Miller—one who is said to be the only genuine species of the nightingale north of the Tweed, keeps a saloon for the accommodation of the Edinburgh blue-stockings, in which sins, and sentiments, and silks, are, by turns, expatiated upon, in a style and manner which are truly Athenian. Not far from the Tron Kirk there is perhaps the most wonderful of them all,—the Œdipus of all mysteries and riddles, as touching law, and learning, and politics—to the junior clerks who attend the parliament-house; the fag end of the Athenian company

of comedians, and of the satellites of opposition in Athenian politics. Œdipus believes that the whole world rests upon his shoulders; and, whether he be haranguing from behind his counter, or trotting along the street, he is constantly hitching up his shoulders as if he were alarmed lest that world should go off its poise. But to see this little man in the zenith of his glory, you must see him in the parliament-house, where he is regularly found, as soon as the clerks have gone to the desk, and the players to the rehearsal, running about with so much eagerness and appearance of wisdom, that, until he speaks, you would mistake him for Jeffrey, or rather for Henry Cockburn, to whom he has one similitude—that of a naked poll. As he has previously argued or decided every cause that can come before any of the courts, he comes, not to profit by the wisdom of the more express organs of the law, but to tell how far they deflect from the right, by swerving from his institutes.

Each bookseller has, not only his levee as well-attended as ever that of Sir Richard Phillips in his glory was by ten-shilling-a-sheet overpaid authors, but his evening party, in which he shines. Thus Constable dines with deep-going politicians, Blackwood frequents prayer-meetings, Manners and Miller whistle,—this one associates with fiddlers,

and that takes the unprotected females under the folds of his calf-skin mantle.

But, although each of the notable Athenians has his peculiar place and way of holding forth, there is a regular intercourse among them all; and accounts current of praise or censure are as regular and frequent among the Athenians, as those of cash are among other people. Indeed, if it were not for this curious banking system, it is very doubtful whether the intellectual "patrimony or conquest" of any one Athenian would be sufficient to set him up in business as a regular and every-day subject of conversation. Thus, whenever you find an Athenian cutting his first figure, no matter what sort of figure it is, in one part of the city, you are sure to hear somebody making a great deal of noise either for or against that figure in another part.

But manners are, however, somewhat like the mind itself,—we can observe their phenomena, and trace their effects; but, as they are in themselves nothing more than the various states of an ever-changing something which we can never exactly comprehend, no abstract disquisition upon them, even as they are found in the Athens, would bear to be read, although one should be at the trouble of writing it. When we grapple with them in

real flesh and blood, and can say that this is Archy Campbell, or this his Majesty's Advocate,—that this is Mrs. Macspine, who studies the Differential Calculus,—or that Lady Macfidget, who calculates differences, or makes them for other people's calculation,—then the gentle readers draw their chairs together, and prepare for that most delectable of all entertainments,—the dissection of an individual character; but when we treat of the disembodied virtues or vices, we are allowed the sole and exclusive benefit of our lucubrations.

Still, it is impossible to overlook the rapidity with which all sorts of things whisk about in the Athens, and how cleverly her ladies and gentlemen creep into the nut-shells of science, or the whispering-corners of scandal; or how dextrously they contrive to make one thing answer many purposes. It is impossible that any people, and more especially a people so ardent and so educated as the Athenians, can be without a reasonable commodity of love; but the talking apparatus is so sensitive to the slightest touch, and vibrates so instantaneously over the whole city, that this commodity cannot be brought into action in the ordinary way. Accordingly, the various systems of philosophy which have from time to time warmed and gladdened the Athenians, have been, in a great measure, a succession of bows and quivers for the

artillery of Cupid. Sometimes they were awkward enough for this purpose; and the barbs and feathers of those instruments of man's mischief, sticking out at the ends of arguments against revelation, or disquisitions upon cause and effect, had rather a ludicrous appearance. When Smellie brought the philosophy of beasts into vogue, matters mended a little; and youths and virgins sauntered away into the fields for the pure and intellectual purposes of investigating the origin and progress of lambs and linnets. The day of the botanists was equally favourable for erotic purposes; and when the researches of Doctor Hutton had made the fairy-rings upon Arthur's Seat matter of philosophy, thither winded the philosophic fair of the Athens, under the soft beams of the chaste moon, just to see whether they could catch a glimpse of the green elves, capering and dancing to the tune of "Catherine Ogie," as Scotch fairies had been known to do from time immemorial.

But the best system that ever came into general practice and belief, has proved to be that of the skull-men, a system which, though the Athenians gainsayed it a little at the outset, they have subsequently fallen deeper into than any other people upon the earth or moon; and in a truly-bred Athenian company, you are sure to have your cranium thumbed over by every lady and gentle-

man. This is an excellent system, if there be truth in it; and indeed, whether there be truth in it or not, it brings the papillæ of the fingers, whose very use is the receiving of impressions, into contact as it were with the very elements of the soul; and when the delicate fingers of a lady are measuring the base and altitude of No. 1. in a gentleman's neck, there is every chance that the embers of the tender passion, if they have not previously been charred to incineration, shall blaze or burn.

Nor is this the only use to which the Athenians apply this philosophy. They are so quick in their perception, that they instantly know the strong and the weak points of your character, and they regulate their proceedings accordingly. If, for instance, your indications of combativeness be strongly developed, they are sure never to offer the least insult; but if you be wanting in those indications, they make you feel it. If your forehead shows wit, they are exceedingly humdrum and metaphysical; but if the contrary they treat you with quips and puns without end. Knowing from the peculiar structure and exercise of their own admiration, that people admire the most that in which they excel the least, they make sure of shining by turning the conversation to those subjects of which, judging from your organization, you have the least.

The religion of the Athenians is perhaps, one of their greatest peculiarities: they,—meaning the people of consideration, and not the populace,—are the most religiously irreligious people that one can imagine. A few years ago, when it was the fashion to be sceptical, the very name of going to church stamped a man as belonging to the veriest vulgar; but the kirk has again come into vogue, and it is now just as much a mark of vulgarity not to go there, as it then was to go. If, however, the value of their church-going were to be tried by their conduct during the week, its moral advantages would not be found great. But it answers many purposes: the official men find their interest in being kirk-elders; ladies and gentlemen see each other; and after so pious and praise-worthy a thing as church-going, there can be little harm in an assignation, or an adjournment to a tavern-dinner,—occurrences which are very frequent upon the evenings of Athenian Sundays. When you have witnessed the deep and prolonged potations of some Athenian worthy upon the Saturday night, when you have heard the racy jokes and anecdotes with which he enlivened his cups, and when you have marked how small store he set by the principles as well as the practices of religion, you wonder at the calm face that he puts on as he stands at the church-door, watching the pence and sixpences

that are thrown into the charity-plate. It is all a cloak, however, and like other cloaks, the more cumbrous that it is, it is the sooner cast off. One cause of its being put on at all, may be, that the fashion of the higher classes going to church carries the lower classes there also; and nobody can pass the receiving board, which is watched by a provost or a judge, without contributing something to the increase of voluntary charity; which being thus obtained from the poor, prevents the necessity of levying so large contributions on the rich. I have stated this reason, not only because it is both pleasurable and profitable, but because, whatever it may be in its primary intention, in its ultimate result it is good. Every thing which tends to place the labouring classes, if but for a moment, or during the performance of a single act, upon the same level with those who do not labour, is highly advantageous to them; and thus, admitting that the Athenians go to church as well to save their pockets as to compound for the doings of the week, the said Athenians do, upon that account, deserve nothing but praise.

Leaving the church-going, and subsequent feasting and flirtation out of the question, there is something peculiar in an Athenian Sabbath: it seems as though useful labour and innocent amusements were the only things that deserve to be sus-

pended. The advocates are a privileged class, and it is no scandal in them to drudge at their cases. As little is there any harm whatever in oral discussion of any subject imaginable; but if a maid-servant were to hum a tune, an advocate's wife to give a thump to the piano-forte, or a boarding-school miss to peep into a new novel, the Athens would be in the utmost jeopardy of sinking in the Forth, in which the sinner would have some chance of being ducked. It must not, however, be supposed that among such a people as the Athenians, the Sunday is a day of idleness. It is no such thing; for with both men and women, it is the choice and chosen day of the week, set apart to all manner of gossip and enjoyment; and though it be not the fashion for the people to listen to the music of instruments, or read profane books, yet the music of woman's tongue is soft and sweet, and the book of fate is opened. Whether the present church-going propensity of the Athens shall continue, is a question that it would be difficult to solve: but that the Athens will continue to enjoy herself upon Sunday nights, may be received into the catalogue of truths that are demonstrated.

CHAPTER XI.

SUNDRY QUALITIES OF THE ATHENS, IN SUPPLEMENT.

" In Ethiopia there is a lizard,
Green on the grass, but golden on the sand,
Of slender form and many-tinctured skin:
Of this, when you suppose that you have counted
The tints and glosses, straight the creature turns,
Or you but step aside, when lo, it seems
As new and strange as ever. What you noted
Is all errata, and your task of telling
Is never at an end."

THE wonderful agility with which the Athenians skip about from opinion to opinion in other matters, and the great faculty which they show in altering the attitude and aspect of that everlasting subject, their own city, render it next to impossible to give a likeness of them that shall be accurate for one moment beyond the time that you are taking it. Indeed, if you be not all the readier at your pencil, the chance is that there shall be no con-

gruity or keeping among the features and limbs that you sketch. What you begin with as a Jupiter, you have a chance of ending with as a Vulcan; your Apollo glides into a satyr, and your Venus becomes a hag under your hands. If you would paint a philosopher, however limber or however large you design him, he changes to a driveller or a dandy before you know what you are about; and when you follow him to his home, in order to contemplate the progress of those great things with which he is to enlighten and astonish the world, you find the whole of his mighty mind occupied in fitting false shoulders to his waistcoat, or dipping his whiskers in the essence of Tyre, till the tale run down his cheeks in purple demonstration, as he flounders along in the ball-room. Under such circumstances, I ought not to be blamed, although the light in which I have attempted to represent the Athenians be not that in which they may have appeared to others; nor ought they who fancy that their picture is more accurate than mine, to allow themselves to fall into that idolatrous worship of the Athenian gods; for they may rest assured that there can be more than two pictures of the Athens, all very unlike each other, and yet all very like the original.

The *wit* of the Athenians may be considered as one of their "fundamental features," for many

reasons, and for this among the rest, that it mainly consists of punning, which is accounted the lowest stratum, and therefore the foundation of all wit whatsoever. It is of various kinds and degrees, according to the class of persons among whom it passes current; but still the basis of every Athenian witticism is a pun, and every Athenian, though he should be nothing else, is sure to be a punster. There are two original species of Athenian pun,—the legal and the learned: the first is said to have been introduced by the late Henry Erskine, and the second is contested by the late Professor Hill, Dr. Brewster, and others. Whether this be true at all, and if true, how far the truth of it extends, I am not either bound or prepared to say, but certain it is that those learned and humorous persons get more of it laid at their door than do any others now in existence; and the "gentleman of the Dunciad" who was "determined that every good thing should be Shakspeare's," has many praiseworthy imitators in the Gem of the North. You cannot meet with an idle draper yawning at the door of a shop, who has not some good thing of Harry Erskine to tell you: nor is there a student within the Athenian college who has not John Hill by rote. Brewster, indeed, is not so often quoted; but Brewster is still alive, and what is more, he

holds no public function or situation of any great consequence.

I went to view the Advocates' Library, in company with two of that faculty; nd they edified me with sundry choice sayings of the immortal Harry. I remarked, that it was singular that the advocates, the most illustrious body within the Scotch seas, should have been the last to have a hall in which to contain their collection of books. "The same remark was made," said my conductor, "to the late Honourable Henry Erskine, and he said a very clever thing upon the subject." I very naturally gave him that wishing and inquiring look, which brings out a good thing without any preamble; and he, after working a-while at his ears, hemming, and rubbing his spectacles, said, "Why, Sir, I must condescend, *in limine*, that the Dean of Faculty, (Mr. Erskine was once Dean, and the title continues longer than the office,) was a great wit, and that 'a mortification,' according to our vocabulary, means a bequest of money or property of any kind; and, having given in this condescendence, I will proceed to the argument of the case. Well, Sir, a gentleman was remarking to the Dean, the shame that it was to the faculty, that they had not a better apartment for their library. 'We shall get

it some time, and get it in a Christian way,' said the Dean, with that happy look which always indicated that there was something to come. 'Why in a Christian way?' said the gentleman. 'Because,' said the dean, 'we shall get it through the *mortification of our members*,' at which the gentleman laughed very heartily." I, of course, had no choice but to laugh also, although the wit ran a little too slow for me; but my laugh was taken with more cordiality than I had grace to give it with, and that was a signal for more of the same kind, of which I may mention a specimen or two. A case was argued one day before Lord Braxfield, in which the counsel had rather exposed a position which that hasty judge had laid down a few days previous; and his lordship was so much irritated, that he snatched up a ruler, and brandished it at the counsel, as much as to say, "if I had you out of court, I would cudgel you." "What does he mean by that?" said an English barrister who happened to be present. "He is doing that which you must have done often," said Erskine, "he is *taking a rule to show cause*." "Why that is rather a novel rule to take in a court of justice," said the Englishman. "Not at all," replied Erskine, "it is merely a rule *nisi*." One of the latest of Erskine's witticisms that were repeated to me was that of the two Macnabs,

father and son,—the first of whom was chief of that sept of the Celts, and the other the author of a system of the universe, too sublime even for Athenian comprehension. The chief was the most patriarchal as well as the most powerful man of his day, and the number of his sons and daughters rivalled that of some of the illustrious patriarchs of olden time. Harry Erskine said, that "these two Macnabs were the two greatest men that ever had lived, for the one could make a world, and the other could people it." Another saying of his was very often repeated to me, but I confess I never could see the point of it. A Tory lawyer, of feeble body and feebler mind, was elevated to the bench, and the Athenians supposed that a Whig, remarkable alike for his talents and the slowness of his motions, had been improperly overlooked, while the little Tory was promoted. It was remarked to Erskine, that they "had put the cart before the horse." "No," said Harry, "they have not done that, they have only put the ass before the elephant." Another time, when a client was hesitating into which of the hands of two writers to the signet he should throw himself, somebody said, he was like the ass between the two bundles of hay. "No," said Erskine, "he is like the bundle of hay between the two asses; for, whichever way he goes, he will be

eaten up." This species of pun is mostly confined to Whigs, or gentlemen who have some pretensions to literature or taste; and in as far as intellectuality can be predicated of such matters, it may be called the *pun intellectual*. From Harry Erskine, the intellectual pun of the Athenian barristers does not appear to have descended full and entire to any one individual. A small piece fell to the share of George Cranstoun; but he is too independent for using it, and therefore he is said to have laid it out at interest for the benefit of the next generation. John Archibald Murray got a slice, but it was from the side upon which the article had lain for some time, and thus it is said to be somewhat musty. Jeffrey got a choice cut, but he is said to have carried it so long in his breeches-pocket, among slips of the Review, that it is as hard as granite. Cockburn got a large piece out of the very middle, but he is reported as having stuck it over so thickly with sugar-plums, that the original owner would have great difficulty in knowing it. The kissing-crust, and a dainty crust it is, fell to the share of John Clerk, but John is said to have soaked it so much in butter, that delicate stomachs are unable to bear it. After such a distribution, it seems exceedingly doubtful whether the whole can be again reunited; and while one laments the cutting up of the thing itself, one is

amused at the more slender Whiglings, who run about showing, boasting of, and smacking the waste-paper in which it was originally wrapped up.

There is another species of legal pun, which first came to maturity under M'Queen, of Braxfield. This may be styled the pun *ad hominem*, and is calculated to depress the spirits in the same ratio as the other is calculated to raise them. While I was in the Athens it was by no means common in the Parliament-house, but I was told that it forms a standard dish at all loyal and official feasts, and that upon ordinary occasions it lies in Blackwood's shop for the inspection of the curious.

The learned pun is of several kinds, according to the class by whom it is used. That which was brought to perfection by Professor Hill was a sort of polyglot. For instance, in order to indicate learning, and wit, and tea, the Professor inscribed his tea-chest with the word "*doces*;" and when upon a cold winter day, one of his students kept bawling "*claude ostium*," so loud as to give annoyance, the Professor turned upon him with "*claude os tuum*," which gained him more admiration with the Athenians than if he had rivalled Porson himself.

None of those kinds of punning are, however, to be regarded as purely Athenian. They were all invented or improved by strangers; and if one wishes to become acquainted with the genuine Athe-

nian pun in all its simplicity, one must seek it at those coteries of small philosophers and blue-stockings, which are found at Athenian suppers, more especially on Sunday evenings, for it is by much too delicate and weakly a thing for lasting even till the day following.

The whole sports and amusements that are peculiar and congenial to the Athenians seem to be regulated by a kind of Salique Law. They being such as females can neither join in, nor, in most instances, witness. They are of two kinds: the amusements of the tavern, and the amusements of the turf. In the former, "high jinks," and the other harmless fooleries of the olden time, have given place to the orgies of hell-fire clubs, and others that are better undescribed; but in the latter, "golf" and "curling" continue to divide the year, and the wisdom of the Athens may be seen during the summer exercising itself daily in urging the ball upon Brunstfield-Links, and during the winter in hurling large stones along the ice upon the Loch of Duddingstone. Although there be many good places for walking in the vicinity of the Athens, no such thing is known as a public promenade—that is forbidden on Sunday, and, except a trot along Princes Street, and a moon-light turn around the Calton, the gentlemen of the Athens are too busy, either in doing something, or in doing nothing,

for promenading during the week. Drive there is none, and it is not much to be regretted, for there is absolutely nothing to be driven.

Another small feature in the character of the Athenians is the high and supercilious disdain with which they affect to look down, not merely upon their fellow-Scotchmen, but upon all the world. How they originally came by this quality, it would not be easy to determine, and therefore it is, perhaps, needless to inquire; but, as it is permanent and general, it must have something upon which it permanently feeds. It is by no means peculiar to those who are born in the Athens; for no sooner does a Lowland clown take up his locality there as a writer's clerk, than he begins to toss up his head at the land which produced and fed him, and "writes himself *armigero*, in any bill, warrant, quittance, or obligation, *armigero*." And no sooner does a tattered and trowserless *Rorie* escape from the wilds of Sutherland, or the woods of Rannoch, to lug half an Athenian air one from tea-party to tea-party, than "she is a shentlemans, and teuks her whisky wi' a 'Cot tam' like a loört;" and, in fact, it seems a contest between those two sets of worthies, which shall take the lead in Athenian dandyism. Indeed, in personal grace at least, the "shentlemans" must be allowed to have much the better of the "armigero."

Light food and long journeys give to the former great buoyancy of spirits, and elasticity of muscle; and it is wonderful to notice, with what a dignified and chieftain-like air, they thumb a pitch-black pack of cards, or "teuk oot the linin'" of a quart pot of small beer, or quartern of the dew of the mountains, as they hold their morning levee at a corner in Queen Street or Abercrombie Place. The "armigero," on the other hand, is as gawky-looking an article as it is possible to meet with, or even to conceive. His feet, which probably not six weeks previous were dragging a stone weight of shoes and mud, through the clay of Gowrie, or the tough loam of Lothian or Fife, are squeezed into a pair of boots, upon which they are taking vengeance, by stretching the leg an inch and a half over every side of the heel; his great red hands put you more in mind of lobsters than of any thing human, and they are dangling from his shoulders as if each articulation were strung with wire; and when his deep and dismal Doric is drawled out into what is reckoned the fashionable accent in the Athens, you can liken it to nothing but a duet composed of the love-songs of Jack Ass and Tom Cat. In consequence of the number of those two classes of Athenian dandies, dandyism of a higher order is banished. I mentioned formerly that there is no such thing either as a drive or an article

driven (quills alway excepted,) any where about the Athens; and therefore no fashionable gentlemen could endure the association of the Athenian pavé. If such men should by accident get there, he would not be eclipsed, but he would be absolutely buried under the thick mass of the turf of the mountains, and the clods of the valleys.

Perhaps it is this total absence of every thing elegant in the shape of man from the public streets and walks of the Athens, that has given so singular a twist to the minds and manners of the Athenian fair. Those dandies, instead of being objects for admiration, are subjects for criticism; and when an Athenian belle first quits her bread and butter, and flits forth to conquer the world—heedless of the fact, that such was the condition of a dear papa ere he *booed* himself into some government office, "processed" (I do not use that word in the Yankee meaning) into the management of some laird's estate or the estate itself—she curls up her nose at these, the only "creatures" that she meets, with so much force as to give it, as Dr. Barclay would say, "a siderial aspect" for life. For a long time she holds fast her aversion; but though her nose be elevated, her fortunes do not rise along with it. Time drives the wheels of his curricle across her countenance, and there is no filling up the ruts which they leave. Meanwhile the de-

spised clerks become wigged advocates, or wily solicitors; and the lady stretches her neck over her six-pair-of-stairs window, to catch a glance of the bustling man of business whom she despised and contemned when he was a Princes Street walking-boy, and would have accounted her society and countenance the very choicest thing in the world. Time, who is the most delightful of all visiters during the early stage of his acquaintance, gradually introduces his friends; and at last, old hobbling Despair is admitted into his coterie. In some places, the ladies to whom he has been introduced seek their quietus at the card-table; in others, they abandon this world for the next, and very frequently choose the by-paths to heaven—because a way thronged with dissenting ministers is always a sort of love-lane, in which a lady may at least gather the dry stalks of those flowers which she neglected to pull while they were in season. But in the Athens they go another way to work,—they dip their stockings in heaven's azure, pass through the hoops of small philosophy to the heaven-ward attic, (from which, perchance, the Athens takes its name,) and thence launch the bolts of their criticism against all the world below—that is, all the world of their own sex, and below their own age.

Thus have I with, as an Athenian *Literatus* would say, "the softest feather dipt in mildest

ink," and with uniform watchfulness against unmerited praise and undeserved censure, noted down a few of those features and traits which stamp upon the Modern Athens, the isolation and individuality of her character, as she stands away from other cities, and appears in herself. Had I followed her own *modus operandi*,—had I torn in pieces the private characters of all to whom I found it necessary to advert for the purposes of illustration, and sported with the mangled fragments in the open streets,—had I dug into their family vaults, and wantonly exposed the bones of their ancestors to the gaze of every passer by,—and had I set the signet of my approbation or disapprobation upon them, not on account of what they were in themselves, but of whence they sprung, what they possessed, and how they were connected,—then, assuredly, the spirit of my writing would have been more in accordance with the Athenian spirit, and I would have been loved, lauded, and adopted as a worthy and hopeful son of the aspiring attic of the *Græcia mendas*. But such honour is not my ambition; and therefore my study has been to describe things with all the simplicity of truth, and, as in whatever bearing the semblance of censure I have written, I have wished and attempted to be corrective rather than caustic—to go to the causes of evil rather than to play with the

symptoms of it, I must conclude, that if any shall blame me for the freedom of my words, they must do it because their hearts are smitten, and not because their deeds are misrepresented. The Athens boasts of herself as a model of elegance and of taste: I found her a compound of squalor and of vulgarity. She boasts of her philosophy: I found it pursuing thistle-down over the wilderness. She boasts of her literary spirit: I found her literature a mere disjointed skeleton, or rather the cast-skin of a toothless serpent. She boasts of her public spirit: I found almost every man pursuing his own petty interests, by the most sinister and contemptible means: and, perchance, the most noisy of her patriots standing open-mouthed, if so that the very smallest fragment of place or pension might drop into them. She boasts of the encouragements that she has given to genius: I looked into the record, and I found that every man of genius who had depended upon her patronage, had been debauched and starved. She boasts of the purity of her manners: I found the one sex engaged in slander as a trade, and the other in low sensuality as a profession. Under those findings—and they required not to be sought—I had no alternative for my judgment. When she redeems herself from them, and becomes in

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reality even something like what she would call herself in name, let her then make comparisons with the Gem of ancient Greece. Let her give some proof that Minerva Parthenon is her tutelar goddess; when she has done so, let her build the temple to that divinity; and, as she finishes the sculpture of the last metope, with deeds of her own worthy of being recorded, I (as the Turk did when her countryman completed the spoliation of the ancient Athena,) shall to the completion of the merit which she claims, subscribe

ΤΕΛΟΣ.

LONDON:
Printed by WILLIAM CLOWES,
Northumberland-court.

NOV 14 1938